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# PROGRESS and OBSTACLES
## in achieving the minimum objectives of the World and Africa Plan of Action

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# Progress and Obstacles in Achieving the Minimum Objectives of the World and Africa Plans of Action: A Critical Review

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# INTRODUCTION

## A. ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND OF REPORT

1. In Resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975 on the World Conference of the International Women's Year the United Nations General Assembly called upon Governments to examine as a matter of urgency, the recommendations contained in the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the Conference including action to be taken at the national level such as:

> (a) The establishment of Short-term medium-term and long-term targets, and priorities to this end, taking into account the guidelines set forth in sections I and II of the World Plan of Action, including the minimum objectives recommended for achievement by 1980;
>
> (b) The adoption of national strategies, plans and programmes for the implementation of the recommendations within the framework of over-all development plans, policies and programmes;
>
> (c) The undertaking of regular reviews and appraisals of progress made at the national and local levels in achieving the goals and objectives of the World Plan of Action within the frame work of over-all development plans, policies and programmes."

2. On the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2060 (LXII) of 12 May 1977on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the World Plan of Action. In paragraph 2 of that resolution, the Council identified areas in which action would be urgently needed during the period 1975-1980," inorder to achieve the minimum targets set forth in paragraph 4 of the World Plan of Action." Also in paragraph 6 of that Resolution, the Council "requested the Secretary-General to ensure, as far as possible, that the Questionnaire relating to the implementation of the World Plan of Action would be forwarded to Governments in 1979 and that a comprehensive report based on the replies to those questionnaires be prepared for consideration at the twenty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and at the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for women, 1980." 1/

3. In compliance with paragraphs 2 and 6 of this Resolution, Questionnaires were sent to Governments in 1979 with a view to "assessing progress achieved since 1975 at the national level towards the improvement of women's condition."2/

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1/ E/CN.6/611, February 1978, para 5.

2/ Questionnaire on Implementation during the period 1975-1978 of the World Plan of Action adopted at the World Conference of the International Women's Year, para 3.

3. This report is a st[illegible]'s the implementation of the above-mentioned mandates.

B. Nature of the Report

4. Out of the 49 Questionnaires distributed to member States of the Region, 18 replies were received. As of 4 September 1979, when the Regional Consultant assumed duty at the Regional Headquarters, only eight countries3/ had submitted their replies. Two countries 4/ cabled to inform that the Questionnaire was too difficult for them to answer. Three other replies 5/ arrived at the beginning of October. Seven more replies 6/ came in at the final stages of preparation of the draft.

5. The paucity of replies and the delay in receiving replies sent made it necessary for the Consultant to rely on other sources in the preparation of this paper.

6. It became clear in the course of the preparation of this report that many Governments were unable to obtain quantitative data in the areas of Employment, Education and Health of Women, especially for the period since 1975.

7. Some Governments, however, did attempt to provide data in these areas which varied from reliable to very tentative estimates. The absence of adequate data makes it very difficult to provide comparative tables to assess progress made since 1975. All the same effort has been made to collect data from other sources, especially, from the Population Division of the Economic Commission for Africa and reports from other United Nations Agencies.

8. Not all the Governments gave full answers to the Questionnaire. In some cases, whole chapters were left unanswered; in other cases, answers were too brief and did not provide sufficient information for comparative analysis.

9. From an analysis of replies received, it appears that the Questionnaire itself proved too difficult to elicit full responses by the Governments. The questionnaire requested a great deal of information to be supplied from many government departments, a cumbersome and time-consuming process.

10. In view of the different problems facing the Regions, it is suggested that in future Regional Commissions should be given the opportunity to prepare their own questionnaires in consultation with each other and Headquarters to allow for comparability of findings.

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3/ Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Madagascar, Senegal, Tunisia.
4/ Upper Volta, Mali.
5/ Swaziland, Malawi*, Uganda*
6/ Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Guinea, Seychelles*, Zaire. The delay in receiving these replies made it difficult for the results to be incorporated in the draft report. Where appropriate and possible however use has been made of them.

*In the case of countries marked with an asterisk, the countries supplied reports instead of responding directly to the Questionnaire.

C. Africa before independence and now

11. This introduction is included in order to point out the unique features and problems of the Africa Region.

General Features

12. The equator crosses Africa almost at its exact center and thus the greater part of the continent lies within the Tropics. About two-thirds of it is located in the Northern Hemisphere. North Africa is separated from tropical Africa by the Sahara Desert. There are no great gulfs or seas that extend deeply into the interior. These physical conditions continue to impede rapid communication between urban and rural areas and within the rural areas.

13. A unique feature of Africa is the huge plateau that includes most of the continent. There are four major river systems in Africa: the Congo, the Niger, the Nile and the Zambezi.

14. The climate in Africa is a combination of temperate tropical, or arid temperatures. Except for mountain areas, temperatures in Africa are high throughout the year affecting the vegetation of the Region. Rain is a critical factor in the life of Africa. The uncertainty of the rains in tropical Africa, or the lack of rain in more arid regions, is a basic problem in Africa. When the rains fail, which occurs frequently, there is famine. The general characteristics of this Region, in terms of structure and climate, have a great influence of the people of Africa.

The People

15. A great variety of people live in Africa, including persons of European and Arab descent. More than 800 languages are spoken in the Region. The official languages of the Economic Commission for Africa are English, French and Arabic.

16. The present situation of Africa and of women in the Region has been greatly determined by its colonial history. While the Portugese penetration of the continent began in the fifteenth century and initiated the slave trade that drained the region of millions of its inhabitants, the colonial division of the continent took place at the end of the nineteenth century, with the Region being divided into colonies (with the significant exceptions of Ethiopia and Liberia) held by Great Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Portugal. Boundaries were established on the basis of colonial power rivalries without regard to ethnic or linguistic realities.

17. Before the colonial era women on the continent shared many rights with men of the Region; both had their roles in the predominantly agricultural societies. During the colonial era, European administrations stressed the development of cash crops for export, which became the province of men, and exploitation of mineral resources, for which men migrated to the mines.

In response to these and other general patterns, women were left in subsistence farming which became a neglected sector. They were frequently ignored in the colonial systems of education and administration that grew up and offered some opportunities for advancement and employment largely to men of the Region.

18. After independence, which came to most African countries in the period 1948-1975, many of these same patterns lingered. The neglect which characterized colonial policy towards women continued into the post-independence era. It is only since 1975 that significant attention is being paid to altering the situation of women of the continent.

## CHAPTER I

### EMPLOYMENT

19. This chapter examines a number of aspects of the employment situation of women and some of their related economic roles. It deals with the participation of women in the rural and urban sectors of the economy. Also discussed are the issues of maternity benefits, equality of access and of conditions of employment with men and the measures undertaken by Governments to help women to combine work and family responsibilities. The chapter concludes with a discussion of some of the obstacles that stand in the way of employment of women and the measures needed to improve their condition.

### A. Economic status in rural areas

20. It is known that women form the largest proportion of rural dwellers in Africa. It was estimated (in 1974) that 60-80% of agricultural production was in the hands of women. 1/ They do most of the weeding, sowing and harvesting, usually using very primitive tools. In Gabon, it was calculated that women work more than 200 days annually in the fields. 2/ Table 1 (Statistical Annex) shows the work of a Zambian woman during the planting season. Table 2 compares male and female labour in rural areas of Sierra Leone. These two tables confirm that women are active in rural development.

21. Apart from agriculture, many rural women engage in food processing, animal husbandry and handicrafts. They trade in agricultural produce, crafts and small animals. Since many rural areas lack good roads, women walk to central markets, with loads on their heads, sometimes carrying their infants with them. But for these women agricultural produce may not reach many parts of their countries. The role of women in the distributive sector is essential.

22. Rural women also trade to earn cash for their upkeep and for their children. Male migration from rural areas to towns for wage and salaried jobs has left the rural sector to the care of women; many women have thus become heads of households in addition to their normal farm duties. See Table 3 for the position of women in rural household in Kenya. The Table presents the picture of the position of women in several African rural areas.

23. Rural women look after the home, cook and take care of children. Since many rural areas do not have a regular water supply, women must go long distances to fetch water.

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1/ "The Changing and Contemporary Role of Women in African Development," UNECA, 1974.

2/ "The Impact of Modern Life and Technology on Women's Economic Role," UNECA, 1972.

Gathering fuel is also women's work. These two roles can take the better part of each day. They are also very taxing on the strength of women yet they carry no remuneration nor are they recognized for their economic importance.

24. Times are, however, changing and Governments are becoming aware that women make a major contribution to the economy of the Region. This is evidenced by the measures being taken to improve the lot of rural women. In the replies to the Questionnaire, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya reported that a rural development plan aimed at raising the productivity of women had been launched and that rural development centres provided agricultural guidance for both men and women engaged in farm work. Libya also has a programme for the reclamation of farm land and the construction of dwellings with modern conveniences on each farm holding. The ownership of such holdings can be transfered to male or female farmers.

25. Other countries reported various measures undertaken to improve the status of women in rural areas. Egypt stated that there exists a Central Agency for Producer's Co-operatives which assists in spreading small industries in towns and villages and in marketing the products.

26. In Mauritius, rural women are supplied with inputs to increase their productivity and incomes. Regular meetings are held to encourage them to increase their output in various ways. Botswana has promoted an accelerated Rural Programme since 1973.

27. In Kenya, there are plans to provide simple technologies for the preparation and storage of food. Items include storage cribs, simple grinders and shellers. Training programmes launched in 1975 have covered over 200 courses. Infrastructural services have also been provided in some rural areas.

28. Tunisia reported that rural women have been participating in development plans as advisers. Agricultural training centres have also been set up to train girls and women. Credit facilities exist to help rural people to improve their activities. Mauritania stated that since 1968, there have been centres for training women in various economic activities.

29. In Southern Ghana, women have formed farming cooperatives for the processing of palm kernels. Newly-acquired machines to press oil from the kernels have freed women from the formerly arduous task and have improved the quality and quantity of palm oil. 3/

30. Upper Volta has launched a survey to determine the activities of rural people with special reference to women and girls.

3/ Annual Reports 1975/76. National Council on Women and Development (Ghana).

Results of the survey would give indications as to how to plan development programmes with women in mind.4/

31. Replies to the Questionnaires and other sources indicate that Governments are beginning to pay attention to the economic roles of women in the rural areas, and measures are being undertaken to improve their status. All the same, the situation of rural women, generally, has not undergone much improvement. Lack of accessibility makes it impossible for information and training to reach many rural women. Lack of transport and markets for their produce and handicrafts also decrease their productivity. Technologies which ease the burden of labour do not reach women farmers often enough.

32. The Africa Region continues to suffer from hunger and poverty, while women in the rural areas need assistance in increasing their productivity. The rural populace must have access to such inputs as fertilizers, irrigation facilities, agricultural machinery and pesticides. They must also have access to land and credit.

33. At the FAO World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development held in Rome, July 1979, it was agreed that there should be imposition of ceilings on the size of private land holdings. Also agreed was the redistribution of land to the landless peasants and small land holders. The role of women in agrarian reforms was emphasised. 5/

34. Since a number of countries are now beginning to see the importance of women in food production, it is important to train them for their farming roles. The need for simple technological devices to ease the burden of farm labour cannot be overemphasized. Rural women still continue to farm with primitive tools and old methods which lower their productivity and increase their burdens.

35. Governments are urged to intensify their efforts to ascertain what the real circumstances of the rural women are during the next half of the Decade. The neglect of rural women in the development effort constitutes a serious loss of potential and wastage of human resources.

### B. Women in Urban Areas

36. Women in employment in urban areas can be grouped into four main categories.

(a) The majority of them have missed formal education and are unskilled workers. Many of them engage in small-scale trading while some may be wage earners; others are full-time housewives.

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4/ Programmes des Nations Unies pour le developpement en Republique de Haute Volta - 1977, page 10.

5/ Special Report on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. Africa, No. 97 September 1979,

(b) There are those with primary school education, considered as semi-skilled. They work in offices, shops, industries, etc;

(c) The third group consists of those who are fortunate enough to go through secondary school and have had some kind of professional training. They are mainly found in the teaching and nursing professions and other sectors of the economy;

(d) Lastly, there are those who have had university education or other advanced professional training. These are the women who can work their way up and reach administrative or executive levels where they can get involved in planning and decision-making.

37. The women in the first category may be economically well-off or may fall into the category of the urban poor depending upon the type of economic activities in which they engage. A good number of women in this first group have migrated from villages into the towns to seek jobs. Problems in the rural areas have forced many women into towns "even if there is only a 50 per cent or even a 33 per cent probability of obtaining a job, because the average wage in the modern sector is two or three times the average agricultural income." 6/

38. The changing roles of women from absolute dependence on men to partial or total independence have equally forced women to earn wages to support themselves and their children. It is becoming increasingly important for women to find ways to earn cash to meet various needs and therefore they go in for any job at low wages, and sometimes with very poor conditions and little job security. 7/

39. For many of the women in this first group prostitution can be a good source of income. The majority of the women in the other categories could be classified as salaried employees and their progress depends on their competence and qualifications.

40. Replies from Governments indicate that men and women working for salaries receive equal pay for equal work, and enjoy the same conditions. Ivory Coast stated that the Labour Code and relevant decrees provide for equal treatment of women. Equal salaries for the same work and the same professional qualifications are legislatively guaranteed 8/ and the other countries that replied stated that there is no discrimination between men and women as far as employment opportunities are concerned.

41. Despite legislation and other constitutional provisions, many employers continue to prefer men to women in certain categories of employment and still,

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6/ Carl Eicher, et al., Employment Generation in African Agriculture, p.10.

7/ The Data Base for discussion on the interrelations between the integration of women in development, their situation and population factors in Africa, E/CN.14/SW/37 (1974), Para. 41.

8/ Review and appraisal of progress achieved in the implementation of the World Plan of Action, E/CN/6/611, para. 133.

only a few women manage to reach the top where planning and decisions are taken. Although statistics provided in the replies may not be very reliable, yet only a few Governments could put down convincing figures to indicate the percentage of women engaged "as senior administrators or senior personnel engaged in health sector policy formulation and plan preparation," as demanded by the Questionnaire.

42. A careful examination of the number of women engaged in certain occupational categories, from the answers to the Questionnaires as shown by Table 4 and other existing charts, reveals where women's limitations of access are: they tend to be concentrated in a limited number of technical and professional fields to which they are drawn by traditional or natural inclination and in the lower economic range of occupations.

43. Table 5 also sheds some more light on the position of women in economic activity in Libya. They are very poorly represented in the economic activities of their country.

44. A good proportion of women in all the four categories mentioned earlier are engaged in commerce, manufacturing and other activities, even though data on such women are woefully lacking. In many countries of West Africa, trading has been mainly women's work. They trade in agricultural produce, local and imported manufacturing goods; some trade with neighbouring countries.

45. In Eastern and Southern Africa produce marketers are also largely female. The unusually low figures of women in salaried and wage employment in Kenya, as shown by Table 6, could be an indication that the majority of women may be heavily employed in the informal sector.

46. The indicators supplied in Kenya's reply to the Questionnaire presents a different picture to existing figures as far back as 1971. In Table 7, the percentage of women in major occupations in Ghana and Kenya were quite high in the professional and technical categories. The differentials in data submitted in Kenya's reply to the Questionnaire and other sources make it difficult to measure what progress women in Kenya have made in those occupations as presented by Tables 6 and 7.

47. Despite the low representation at the top of the employment ladder, women are, however, breaking into occupations formerly the preserve of men. They may also be fairly were represented in other occupational sectors.

48. In their replies to the Questionnaire, many Governments expressed their intention to collect data on the activities of women. In Kenya, the Women's Bureau will initiate studies and surveys into the whole area of women's employment and unemployment.

So far, a National Survey of Women's Groups, in 1977, has garnered data on women mainly in the rural areas. The data is currently being processed.

49. In Libya, since 1975, measures have been taken to collect data on women but lack of staff to analyse it constitutes one of the setbacks. In Egypt, a comprehensive base line study has been recently initiated by the National Commission with regard to the needs and problems of women. The need to expand and upgrade existing data has been recognised. And in Ghana, an essential input to future planning survey will be undertaken to identify existing and potential areas of economic activity into which women would move over the next decade.

50. All such plans augur well for women and planners towards fulfilling some of the objectives of the World Plan of Action

### C. The right to maternity protection

51. Many countries have laws governing maternity leave and other maternity-related benefits. The leave ranges from two months to four months, with full or half pay.

52. Libya has an unusual regulation which entitles working women to receive bonuses on the occassion of their first born.

53. Mauritania and Madagascar allow working women between 2 months to 14 weeks maternity protection with pay. How much pay was not indicated. In Tunisia, women are allowed only 30 days leave at birth; this can, however, be extended for more days on medical grounds. Women get only half pay.

54. Kenya allows two months leave with full pay, without loss of other benefits. Mauritius and Botswana allow paid maternity leave six weeks prior to confinement and six weeks after confinement in the case of Mauritius. In Uganda, married women can take up to 120 days fully paid maternity leave and a further 90 days on half pay if they so wish.

55. In Zambia, on the contrary, women do not get paid while on maternity leave. Reporting on this situation the Zambian Women's Council deplored the fact that women are victimised for having babies, a role which is part and parcel of national development.9/

56. The variations in the terms governing maternity protection of women make it imperative that uniform regulations are formulated to cover all working women who give birth to children whether legally married or not (See Table 8 for variations in maternity coverage).

9/ Programme of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women 1975-85, Women's Council of Zambia.

57. While looking at maternity protection for women in salaried employment, consideration should be given to unemployed, unmarried-girl-mothers, and also women in the informal sector, for example, rural cultivators, traders etc.

D. Ability to Combine Work and Family Responsibilities

58. For many years, women in all sectors have been combining work with family responsibilities, at the cost of great strain and stress. Nearly everywhere, in the rural as well as urban areas, working mothers have double obligations towards their work and their families and not even the creation of creches, day-care centres and nurseries can adequately relieve women from their obligations.

59. Information provided in the replies to the questionnaires indicates that the number of day-care centres and nurseries, private or state-owned, has been on the increase. In some countries, if not all, of the Region, women rely heavily on other women as domestic help in order to combine work and family responsibilities. A good number of young women, with little or no education, are employed as domestic servants in many urban centres. This situation is particularly characteristic of women in apartheid South Africa.10/ According to the 1970 census, 80 per cent of African women workers in South Africa worked as labourers or domestic servants.

60. The situation whereby women hire other women to overcome their multiple role problems needs to be examined. In the industrialised countries, the advent of cheap labour-saving devices and processed food have released the burden of women to some extent. In Africa Region, the majority of women still rely on a low level of technology using out-moded equipment for domestic purposes, making work in the home very burdensome. It takes time to grind, to pound, to wash, to make fire, to look for fuel and to fetch water. In the absence of domestic help, the burden of the working married women can be monstrous.

61. African women themselves, in training workshops, conferences and meetings, have identified several areas in which appropriate technologies could make a significant difference to the lives of women, especially women in rural areas. These include:

(a) provision of water supplies in rural areas;
(b) introduction of light transport facilities for the portage of water, wood, farm produce and other loads;
(c) adoption of efficient agricultural tools;
(d) introduction of grinding mills and other crop processing equipment. 11/

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10/ Hilda Bernstein, For their triumphs and for their tears: Women in apartheid South Africa, 1975, page 36.

11/ UNECA/ATRCW, Appropriate Technology for African women, 1978, page 34.

62. These devices, together with other simple household tools and cooking devices, can go a long way to relieve women of their many arduous responsibilities. A good number of institutions in Africa are engaged in adapting and developing technologies appropriate to women's work. However their impact has not yet been fully felt. A few of these institutions are: Department of Engineering, National University, Addis Ababa; Department of Agricultural Engineering, Njala University College, Sierra Leone; Centre for Appropriate Technology, University Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique and Société Africaine d'Etude et de Développement, Upper Volta.

63. Priority consideration needs to be given to the process of producing the new or adapted technologies in commercial quantities and at very reasonable prices, otherwise the whole purpose defeats itself. Side-by-side with appropriate technology other measures are needed to involve men in domestic tasks.

## E. OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS

64. Even in the absence of indicators which truly reflect the involvement of women in various economic sectors of the Region, it is clear that most women are economically active. Country reports and questionnaire replies indicate that more and more women are joining the labour force, with some gradually breaking into jobs formerly the preserve of men. All the same, those in wage and salaried employment are mainly rooted in traditionally feminine activities. Only a few women manage to reach the level where decisions are taken. Many obstacles still stand in the way of women and prevent them from either giving maximum performance in their work or attaining positions of responsibility.

65. Some of the obstacles mentioned in the replies indicate that many women lack education and training; there are also the centuries-old traditional attitudes which delineate roles for men and women with the latter's roles being that of wife and mother. One country stated that if women have not made much progress on the employment ladder it is not because they have been discriminated against, but because of their late entry into the labour force. Although the late entry could be an obstacle to their progress it begs the question as to why they were late.

66. Lack of relevant education has been identified as one of the major causes of the high rate of unemployment in urban areas among both men and women. Lack of managerial and administrative skills have also denied many highly educated women chances for promotion. The subjects girls study lead them into employment in the traditional fields of nursing, teaching, and clerical work. Technical institutions continue to enrol all-male student bodies. In the rural areas, women are ignored in the mechanization of agriculture and agricultural extension services, but agricultural education and appropriate technology could ease their workload, increase their productivity, and generally upgrade living standards. In the commercial sector, women traders do not have the credit facilities and management education necessary to expand their businesses.

67. Added to all these are the traditional prejudices and attitudes which place women at home and overlook their need for income to maintain themselves, their homes and children.

68. Some of the prejudices which militate against their employment include: frequent absenteeism from work; unpunctuality, weak motivation and limited aspirations. These complaints are typical not only of developing countries but also of developed ones.

69. As stated in the replies, some Governments have no means to translate their policies into actions. They lack funds and skilled personnel to provide the needed education and training. There is also a serious lack of knowledge at the planning level about the situation and potential of women.

70. Almost all labour laws now grant equal opportunities and conditions to women. Women must test this success by aspiring to jobs in all sectors and at all levels. A study prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America stated among other things that "any social group aspiring to participate in development must participate in what is really happening, try to strengthen its bargaining power and exert organised pressure to change those features of what is happening that conflict most with its perceived immediate interests."12/ As stated in the guidelines for the preparation of this report, "if increased participation by women in the modern sector is considered by Governments to be necessary in order to meet over-all economic targets, then advancement in education, health, legal, social and political status is much more likely than if no substantial participation in employment is considered desirable." 13/

71. Women's pressure groups should therefore provide the impetus to get Governments to consider the participation of women at all levels of development and, where possible, put pressure to bear on Governments to translate their policies into action.

## F. PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE FUTURE

72. Many Governments now have the will and awareness to integrate women into development. Either directly or indirectly, there are many national plans being initiated to improve the situation of women, especially those in the rural areas. A number of obstacles still continue to thwart the programmes of some Governments; these obstacles call for renewed strategies towards the implementation of present and future plans.

73. Action for the future should include:

(a) Greater intensification of efforts to collect data on women in order to have clearer picture of their employment situation;

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12/ Meeting in Mexico, World Conference of the International Women's Year, 1975, page 22-23.

13/ Guidelines for preparation by regional consultants of the reports on review and evaluation of progress made and obstacles encountered at the national level, page 2.

(b) Serious examination of roots of the oppression of women, together with seasons why they are discriminated against in employment;

(c) Exploration of level of entry points to influence Governments;
(d) Compilation of national bibliographies on written materials about women (which frequently are buried in archives and libraries);

(e) Calls for voluntary services; the few privileged women should undertake projects without any expectations of financial gain;
(f) Use of the media as a vehicle for social change. Women in positions with the media should seek to raise the public consciousness with respect to the changing roles of both men and women.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

74. Even in the absence of quantitative data to determine to what extent women are involved in the economies of their countries, facts about the traditional division of labour in African societies demonstrate that women make a major contribution to the economies of the Region. They show too that life for the rural women is very hard. Women are engaged in many economic activities; yet many of these activities are not given due recognition.

75. In many employment sectors, women dominate the low-income categories and only a few reach managerial and executive positions. In spite of all this, the fact remains that women's employment increases the family income and when the family income is increased, living standards are raised.

76. There is a great need therefore to study further the employment situation of women to determine the extent of their involvement in the economic activities of their countries and to explore employment opportunities for the growing number of girls and women who need incomes for their own use and for their children.

77. Employment in the rural areas should be given priority attention in order to retain the young women who flee rural boredom to seek adventure in towns and thereby help to swell the number of the unemployed.

78. Appointments and promotions of women in salaried employment should be made without reference to their sex, but taking into consideration the many obligations of women, for child-raising is a societal responsibility.

79. Economic value should be placed on the work women do so as to be given its due place in research or planning projects and programmes.

80. Prevailing attitudes on the work and the place of women need to undergo drastic changes.

81. And finally, employment of women could constitute a major factor in reducing their reproductive behaviour. Studies have shown that women in full employment tend to have fewer children compared with women who are employed part-time or not at all. 14/

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14/ UN Economic And Social Council. Study on the Interrelationship of the Status of Women and Family Planning. E/CN.6/575/Add.1 13 December 1973, para 118.

## CHAPTER 2

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN

82. Information from the replies to the Questionnaires and other sources reveal some measure of increase in the educational level of women, as a result of increased educational facilities at the primary and secondary levels and increased societal awareness. All the same women still constitute the majority of illiterates in the Region although many Governments have been directing some efforts at raising literacy levels for both men and women. Some countries have also introduced a number of measures particularly to improve the educational status of women in the rural areas.

83. In this chapter, the extent to which women have been involved in education and training programmes and how far they have benefitted from them will be discussed.

### A. Education at first and second levels

84. Statistics reveal that female enrolment is highest at the primary level. Almost all the countries reported that girls are entitled to free education and are subject to compulsory education for the same number of years as boys, except Uganda where by 1976 free and compulsory education had not been introduced. 1/

85. In Mauritius, figures indicate that about 50 per cent of enrolment in primary and secondary schools are girls. Education at the primary level is free but not compulsory. Nearly all schools have been co-educational for a long time.

86. Kenya reported that education is free at the primary level but is not compulsory. Other levels are not free and are not compulsory. Nevertheless, miscellaneous fees that in themselves had become financial burdens to parents of school-going children, and thereby affecting girls more adversely than boys, have been recently abolished.

87. In Morocco, only a small percentage of the school population is female. "While eighteen per cent of school - age girls are enrolled in all of Morocco, the percentage drops to 3 per cent in rural areas. School for girls in the country side is still a rare phenomenon". 2/

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1/ Review and Appraisal of Progress made under the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, E/CN.6/598, 21 July 1976, page 22.

2/ Country Report on Women in North Africa, page 11.

88. It is reported that education in primary and secondary schools in the Sudan tends to be segregated and since there are fewer schools for girls than for boys, more boys have opportunities to study.3/ Tunisia and Libya have made rapid strides in the education of girls. Tunisia has free and mixed education at all levels. There has been equality of access since 1956. In Libya, there are plans to promote public awareness with regard to the importance of female education.

89. Information from other countries indicates that boys and girls have the same access to education at the primary level. Data available from the replies to the questionnaires and other sources provide interesting revelations.

89. Although the percentage of girls enrolled is nearly always below that of the boys, Table 9 reveals that as many boys as girls were not enrolled in school in 1975 in Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Sudan, and Upper Volta. Other reasons besides the traditional biases against girls could account for the low rates for both sexes. In the same vein, there must be other reasons for the high enrolment figures in countries in Southern Africa. Unavailability of data for 1978/79 makes it impossible to determine what the position for girls in primary and secondary is; judging from available data, coupled with increased social awareness, the percentage of girls at the primary level may be almost equal to that of boys.

90. Table 10 gives a rough indication of the pattern of drop-out rate for girls from level one to level three. It reveals that the higher the level of education, the lower the female enrolment. This situation has not improved much since 1975, and the drop-out rate for girls is significantly higher than it is for boys.

91. It is disturbing that in West Africa, Ivory Coast, Togo and The Gambia record low intakes for girls (Table 9), in the absence of restrictive cultural norms. Reasons for the low and high enrolment rates for girls in certain parts of the Region need to be known. Recent reports outline a number of reasons for high drop-out rates among girls including precocious pregnancies, financial problems and relative lack of achievement orientation, as well as the fact that parents do not place high value on the education of their daughters 4/. Although available data does not distinguish between rural and urban female enrolment it is likely that the wastage rate is highest among rural school girls.

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3/ ATRCW, "Employment of Women in the Sudan," Page 46.

4/ Bleek, W. (1975), "Sexual Relationships and Birth Control in Ghana;" Robertson, C. (1977), "The Nature and effects of differential access to education in GA Society," Africa, 47, (2) pp. 208-219.

92. Recent research has explored further the reasons for the high rate of drop-out in the rural areas. Apart from the reasons enumerated above, the girls lack role models. Only 23 per cent of the dropouts have sisters who have completed school; thus most of the girls lack encouragement from home.5/

93. It appears the home environment and the educational level of the parents, particularly the mother, correlates positively with the education of girls. Research into the background of mothers at all socio-economic levels is necessary to determine the factors which could lessen the magnitude of the wastage rate. If the education of the mother has great effect on her children and consequently on the next generation, then great attention should be paid to the drop-out rate of girls. Much of this responsibility rests on women themselves. In the home both boys and girls should be involved in household duties instead of the usual practice of overburdening girls with housework at the expense of school work. That a girl is as good as a boy should be a fundamental lesson in the home.

B. Equality of Access

94. Almost all the countries replied that educational facilities are the same for boys and girls, with very few differences. Mauritius stated that in the secondary schools boys and girls study the same 'core' subjects but differences are maintained in the elective subjects with girls restricted to such subjects as Home Science and Cookery, on the basis of different

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5/ F.O. AKUFFO, "High Wastages in Women's Education," National Council on Women and Development, Ghana.

"tastes" of boys and girls.

Kenya reported that accomodation for girls in boarding houses is not enough and that the curricula in the institutions are too narrow and limiting for women.

95. Judging from the replies to the questionnaire as well as other sources, access to the same curricula and the same places in schools is still glaringly unequal. Girls are still limited to subjects that are sex-based, and only a few are receiving the type of education which has employment possibilities. Many countries stated that the girls themselves prefer those sex-based traditional subjects but these preferences may be rooted in cultural attitudes and socialization practices. Education for girls still relies heavily on "Home Science" and all allied traditional subjects. Schools themselves seem to be so structured that they seek "to stimulate the boy's interest in subjects that are useful in the labour market, while the interest of the girls is directed towards subjects of little or no vocational relevance." 6/

96. But in this age of scientific knowledge and technological innovation, opportunities are needed to train girls and women to be able to contribute more effectively to social and economic development. Indeed, the training in home science and allied traditional subjects has been seen by some as a sort of compensation for the refusal to give jobs to women in the modern sector and as a deliberate method of reducing the number of women competing with men for employment in the modern sector. 7/

97. Curricula in the first and second cycle institutions in both rural and urban areas should be geared to the needs of the community to provide a means of retaining the youth in the communities. To this end, a few countries reported that they are making special efforts to revise their curricula so as to make the necessary changes with regard to sex stereo-typing and to make broader fields of training available for girls and women.

## C. Technical and Vocational Education

### Formal Education

98. Very few technical schools offer places to girls; even in those few schools which admit girls, the girls tend to gravitate towards traditional subjects.

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6/ Women's Roles and Education, American Home Economics Association, Page 30.

7/ Ibid, page 34.

Many countries have technical institutes especially designed for boys and vocational centres exist for girls only.

99. Tunisia reported that technical institutes exist for both boys and girls but that each sex seems to have own interests. Laudable as this may seem the fact cannot be denied that certain school subjects and a monopoly on scientific knowledge remain the preserve of boys. In Mauritius, The Sudan, Mauritania and many more countries, technical institutions are reserved for boys only.

100. With the assistance of UNDP a number of countries have initiated programmes aimed at giving technical education to girls and women. In the Gambia, women are given special technical training in subjects such as well-digging, improvements of simple irrigation systems, and production of garden tools. In Niger, there are plans to provide facilities for girls at the Practical Institute for Rural Development at Kob to study agriculture and animal husbandry. Angola is giving top priority to technical education; all training facilities are open to both men and women.

101. A vocational training project in Gabon offers training in electricity, building and mechanics, secretarial duties and office management to both sexes, but girls are concentrated in courses orientated towards office work.

102. In the North African countries, more and more women are receiving vocational training. This may reflect the situation created by the emigration of male workers to other countries or a general need for skilled labour that can be filled by appropriately trained workers of both sexes. 8/

### D. Non-formal and life-long education

103. The number of women participating in non-formal education is difficult to assess. New data strongly suggest that a large number of women, particularly in rural areas, are receiving education and training covering a number of subjects. Several countries, with the assistance of UNDP and UNICEF, have extended educational programmes to the rural areas.

104. In Gambia, the Department of Community Development, set up in 1975 with assistance from UNICEF, has organised village women's training programmes in improved methods of cooking, nutrition, child care, gardening and first aid.

8/ UNDP, REPORT ON INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT, MAY 1978.

Guinea has had on-going programmes since 1973 for women, teaching handicrafts, sewing, hairdressing, animal husbandry, cooking, food processing and literacy. About 3000 women take part each year.

105. Senegal has established a number of training centres for women with the curriculum including leadership training. In Upper Volta, since 1967, there have been plans with the assistance of UNESCO and UNDP to identify the problems facing girls and women in access to education. Pilot projects have been set up to introduce labour-saving technologies such as grinding mills, carts, and solar stoves. These projects have been spread with the aid of women trainers chosen from the villages. 9/

106. While all these programmes serve a need, they tend to be too domestically biased. There is need to identify new and promising economic sectors and to design training programmes to go with them.10/ In the replies to the questionnaire, the section on technical and vocational training for women was not adequately answered by the countries. However, Table 11 shows that women are receiving virtually no training in industrial skills. Training in enterpreneurial and managerial skills also seems inadequate. Even in Madagascar where the percentage of women in vocational training is high, there is no indication as to which skill is being given attention. Although in many African countries women are actively involved in trade and commerce, they receive very little training in these areas.

107. In extending technical and vocational training to women in rural areas, care should be taken not to ignore women in urban areas who need technical skills for modern sector employment. A prerequisite is the enrollment of girls in the craft training courses as well as science subjects at the secondary schools from which they can have greater possibilities of apprenticeship training.

## E. Education at third level 11/

108. The questionnaires supplied very little information on education at the third level. However, Table 10 gives some indications of the situation in this area. Constraints in facilities and other external factors will probably continue to drop-out many girls from the school system. Since the progress of women at the third level is dependent upon the output from the secondary school system, measures need to be taken urgently to retain a good proportion of the girls at the

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9/ Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement en République de Haute Volta, pp. 4-5.

10/ For a listing of new fields that women could enter see Olubanke Akerele, Women Workers in Ghana, Kenya, and Zambia (ECA/ATRCW,1979).

11/ Education at the third level includes University Education, Advanced Teacher Education and other fields of study beyond secondary education.

secondary level. The percentage of enrolment at third level is still too low.

109. There is urgent need for study of this area to determine the nature of courses girls are following, since employment at this level is closely correleated to the type of education received, and these are the women who will assume positions of responsibility in planning and decision-making.

F. Literacy Education

110. Women constitute the majority of illiterates in the region, with the exception of Lesotho. They also form the majority of pupils in literacy classes in most countries. 12/ A UNESCO report has stated that "the proportion of women in the illiterate population (world-wide) can be estimated at about 60 per cent, and, as a rule, women benefit less than men from adult education." 13/

111. In the replies to the questionnaires, many countries have recognised the need to combat illiteracy and are therefore making special efforts to reduce or to eliminate it. Mauritius stated that illiteracy will be eliminated with the high percentage (95 per cent) of children going to school. Efforts are being made to extend school facilities to remote areas.

112. In 1977, Madagascar created a section within the Ministry of Population and Social Welfare largely responsible for literacy programmes. In Morocco, the overall rate of illiteracy is very high. 87 per cent of all women and 98 per cent of those in the country are unable to read. Although one-half of the population is estimated to be literate in Libya, there are variations in the figure by sex, region and age. For women over the age of 30, the rate is more than 90 per cent.

113. A close relationship exists between the level of literacy and employment. The low literacy level of women could account for their unemployment and their inability to obtain highly paid jobs. A country report on Egypt stated that "the relationship between literacy and employment is especially significant. While not more than 4 per cent of the illiterate women above 15 are wage earners, over 70 per cent of the illiterate men of the same age are employed inone kind of work or another. 14/

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12/ The Data Base for Discussion on the interrelations between the Integration of Women in Development, their situation and population factors in Africa para 49

13/ UNESCO contribution to the Regional Conference in preparation of the World Conference of the UN Decade for Women.

14/ ATRCW/ECA, Country Report on Egypt, page 13.

114. This statement suggests discrimination against illiterate women in the wage earning sector and could be a plausible reason why a large number of illiterate women take to trading and, in the absence of this, to prostitution as a source of income.

115. The case of Tanzania shows that given the will, illiteracy can be successfully tackled at the adult level. In 1971, there were more than five million illiterates in Tanzania scattered over a vast area of nearly 362,000 square miles, some of it almost inaccessible during the rainy season. Despite great obstacles, the Government decided that illiteracy was to be eradicated by 1975. Adult education centers and committees were set up all over the country. Writers' workshops were established to create appropriate materials to meet the needs of the learners. All mass media and national institutions were geared to promote the programme. Literacy themes were printed on popular textiles; dancing groups and jazz bands popularised the movement through their music. All available public and private resources were mobilized in the campaign. 15/

## G. Obstacles to Progress

116. The obstacles that limit the education and training for women are many and varied. These include:

a) Indifference of people to the value of education for girls;
b) Tradition and custom encouraging early marriage for women, or priority given to the education of sons;
c) Lack of opportunity for married women to return to school;
d) High drop-out rates of girls especially in high school;
e) Lack of positive role models;
f) Heavy domestic responsibilities and in the rural areas, work in in the fields;
g) Underestimation of the needs for education for women, as judged by stereotypes for women's employment.

117. On the question of access to the same curricula, even when there are open admissions at the institutional level, more often than not some classes are reserved exclusively for boys; the courses offered to girls limit their vocational and academic horizons.

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15/ "Report on Tanzania's War on Illiteracy." World Education Reports, Number 12 June 1975, pp. 12-13.

## H. Plan of Action for the Future

118. There is urgent need for educational reforms, programmes and legislation. Old educational policies are inappropriate for the inclusion of the full potentials of women in development and they need to be revised.

Ivory Coast has an educational programme for 1976–1989 that has an objective to provide an opportunity for greater participation of women in development and to reduce the gap between the sexes, the social classes and urban and rural women.

119. Other countries are making efforts to revise their curricula so as to make the necessary changes with regard to sex-stereotyping and to make broader fields of training available for girls and women. Libya, in particular, has plans to promote public awareness with regard to the importance of female education.

120. The tendency by Uganda to admit girls at a lower minimum mark to enable them to enter higher institutions should be given attention as it may add more to the already existing superior attitudes of boys. 16/

121. Access to technical education deserves attention. More places should be open for girls in presently male-oriented or male-dominated institutions.

122. Since education is a powerful determinant of employment, there is need for action to ensure girls a more realistic and forward-looking vocational guidance based on a positive and dynamic concept of women's roles in the economic life of the region.

123. Education also has an important influence on fertility. Measures are needed to keep girls in school longer to enable them to become more mature and to develop interests outside the home. If the employment and the education of women have some bearing on fertility, then Governments should give the two priority consideration. The high rate of fertility in the region could pose a serious threat to the planning programmes of certain countries.

## I. Conclusion and Recommendations

124. Available educational statistics reveal the following about women:

- Less than half of girls of school age are in school. As of 1975, 43 per cent of girls between 6–11 years were in school;

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16/ Report on Uganda's achievement and set-backs for the period 1975/79.

- 24 per cent of those aged between 12-17 years were enrolled at the secondary level; 17/

- Women tend to enrol in traditional subjects
  - teacher training, home economics, nursing and secretarial courses in the vocational and commercial training institutions

- Women are still lagging behind men in education, especially at the tertiary level. More women need to be well educated, exposed to the same opportunities as men to be able to fully participate in the development of their countries.

125. Despite great strides made over the last few years in educating girls, there is still a glaring gap between the education of boys and girls. Emphasis on technical and vocational education should be placed on areas that will help to advance the employment opportunities of girls and women.

126. Age-old prejudices against the education of girls should be attacked on all fronts. Part of the effort should be to use the communications media to project a better image of the woman.

127. There exists an elitist bras in education in several African societies. The very structure of the educational system favours a particular group of people, drops out a large number of children through no fault of theirs, and limits their opportunity for fuller development.

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17/ World's Children Data Sheet. International Year of the Child 1979.

## CHAPTER 3

## HEALTH

128. Information received from Governments 1/ in their replies to the questionnaire indicated a trend towards the strengthening of women's programmes in health services by providing pre-natal, post-natal and delivery services, family planning services and continuous health services directed to all infants, pre-school children and school children.

129. Kenya reported that rural women lack health facilities, as health centres are frequently distant, causing them to rely on frequently ineffectual traditional medicines. Plans are underway for increased services of the "Flying Doctor" to remote parts of the country, and to improve the quality of traditional medicine.

130. Mauritius stated that pregnant women generally have poor health status because of non-use of services rather than non-availability of the services; measures being undertaken to encourage women to make use of health services include mobile health services and motivational programmes.

131. The lives of many people in the Africa Region continue to be plagued by a variety of diseases and afflictions, ranging from malaria, tuberculosis, and hookworm to river blindness and a number of infant diseases. Among the Regions of the world, Africa has the highest death rate and " in most of Africa, nearly two-thirds of all deaths are those of children under five years." 2/ It has been ascertained that the health status of many African women has a major bearing on infant mortality and child health. And in many cases, malnutrition has been identified as the "Principal Killer." 3/

### A. Access to Health Services

132. The infant mortality rate (IMR) is not only the most important indicator of the health status of children but also of the level of social development of a country. 4/

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1/ Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Senegal, Tunisia.

2/ Health of the World's Children: Needs and problems, Division of Family Health, WHO page 11

3/ The Data Base, op. cit., page 48.

4/ Health of the World's Children; op.cit., page 2.

Table 12 indicates that the IMR has not dropped to any significant degree in African countries even though the general life expectancy of both sexes combined has slightly increased Table 13. Available data does not differentiate between the health status of women in urban and rural areas, but some sources indicate that the urban population, particularly the privileged communities, largely enjoy the benefits of health services. 5/

133. The percentage of women in medical occupations is very low in Mauritania. There are no female general practitioners or specialists. The numbers of mid-wives and nurses is also low. Infant mortality rate is high (168) and average life expectancy is 40 years. Since 1975, there have been measures to train more nurses and traditional midwives to serve in the rural areas.

134. Libya reported that free medical care is available for all through the hospitals and health centres established in all parts of the country. The maternity and child care centres provide services for women during their child bearing years and also for unweaned babies and pre-school children. Libya has plans to improve her medical services and to campaign for endemic diseases, particularly trachoma and malnutrition.

135. Madagascar stated that even though some health facilities exist, they seem to have benefitted only a small number of women and children. New measures are therefore being taken to direct health services towards the less privileged. Figures supplied by Tunisia indicate that women have a higher life expectancy (by one per cent) than men. According to the reply women enjoy more health services, through the maternal and child health services, than men. Yet in the rural areas the infant mortality rate remains at 78.6 as compared to 34.5 in urban areas.

136. With the assistance of UNICEF, a number of countries are improving their services to rural areas. Senegal has set up village clinics, known as "Pharmacies Villageoises" to provide primary health care and health education. Gambia is training midwives and traditional birth attendants. UNICEF has assisted the MCH programme with supplies, drugs and dietary supplements. In Burundi, UNDP is supporting the extension of health services to rural areas by training female nurses and health assistants.

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5/ Health Care: Focus on the Child and Mother, WHO, page 1.

UNDP supports basic health services in the Central African Republic.

137. Figures supplied by Senegal, as shown in Table 15, are not very encouraging: 282 maternal deaths out of a total of 96,930 deliveries is very high. In the developed world, some countries report maternal mortality rates of less than 6 per 100,000 live births. A survey carried out in 1966 showed more than half of all pregnant women received neither trained antenatal supervision nor skilled help during labour. The situation remains much the same today. 6/

138. The economic, educational and health status of a woman has direct impact on the well-being of her child. The high infant mortality rate in Africa can therefore be seen as a direct effect of the status of the African woman. This being the case, the situation of women in Africa should be closely looked at and all efforts made to improve the conditions under which she lives. Despite all efforts Governments are making to improve health services, not much is being done to ascertain what the real health problems and needs of women are. Most efforts are focussed on the curative side rather than the preventive side of the problem. Why do children and mothers die? This must be a nagging question to all.

139. In 1978, of an estimated 122 million children born, between 10 and 12 million died before reaching their first birthday. And about 77 per cent of these deaths occurred in Africa and South Asia. 7/ Unless the real causes are known and dealt with, African Governments will continue to spend large sums of money in building hospitals and obtaining drugs which may only cure symptoms.

## B. NUTRITION

140. The problem of malnutrition in the Africa Region is caused by a diet with one or more essential nutrients missing, or a quantitative shortage of food. Women and children are most vulnerable to malnutrition.

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6/ Mother and Child Health: A Fact Sheet. World Health Organization page 4.

7/ Mother and Child Health, op. cit., p. 1.

It has been estimated that "of the more than one and a half billion people who suffer from hunger and undernourishment in the world, a disproportionate percentage is composed of infants, young children and pregnant and lactating women." 8/ This is particularly pertinent to Africa In Africa, most women and children are not well fed for a number of socio-cultural reasons. In several African societies, it is customary for the adult males to eat the best part of the family meal. In some cases, they eat certain foods which women are not allowed to eat, and children eat only the left-overs. Then, there are areas where children and lactating women are prohibited by custom from eating certain foods, often including such foods as eggs, milk and meat, high in necessary protein.

141. Other reasons for malnutrition include:

- Lack of money for buying food;
- Poor water supply;
- Poor food storage and preparation methods;
- Too frequent pregnancies;
- Large families;
- Poor management of resources;
- Land tenure systems;
- Agricultural policies;
- Marketing constraints.

A few countries in the replies to the questionnaire, have recognised the problem of malnutrition and are taking steps to remedy the situation.

142. Mauritius has identified iron deficiency as a public health problem especially among pregnant women and children. Agriculture is being diversified and food production is being intensified as a remedy. Tunisia has conducted a survey on nutrition and consumption habits. Libya said the findings of preliminary studies conducted among vulnerable groups of the population indicated that the nutritional standards are constantly improving.

143. It appears that governments have not grasped the gravity. Judging from the replies, African Governments have no data on what and how much people eat, on who goes hungry and why. Nutrition must receive a priority in development plans.

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8/ International Conference on Women and Food, Vol. III, 1978, page A-71.

## C. FAMILY PLANNING

144. The Region has the world's highest fertility rate, at 46 births per 1,000 population. Only a few countries 9/ have between 30-39 births per 1,000. The annual rate of population growth is about 3 per ent.10/ There must be a strong correlati n between the high mortality and fertility rates. Many children may be born to replace those that died. While frequent pregnancies are known to endanger the health of women, the frequency is also a major factor that restricts women's opportunities for improving their skills, for education and for employment so that their contribution to development is limited. 11/

145. A radical approach towards the basic health and nutritional problems needs to be undertaken to ensure that more children live to maturity.(See Table 17). If childrem were more likely to survive and if parents had opportunities for gainful employment and social security benefits, they probably would produce fewer children.

146. Many societies in several African countries have not as yet realised the benefits of Family Planning and continue to look upon the services as a foreign cultural imposition. Large families in the Region are still prestigious symbols for both the poor and rich. Inspite of persistent negative attitudes towards the programme. many other countries have embraced the services. Table 18 illustrates which countries have Family Planning Programmes and how they operate. Some countries provide the services to reduce fertility; others to maintain the level of population. Mauritania stated in the reply to the questionnaire that Family Planning Services are not considered necessary in view of the low level of her population. Ironically, however, Mauritania has a high rate of infant mortality (168) and life expectancy for women is as low as 40 years.

147. Tunisia has a major Family Planning Programme which came in operation in 196', Importance has also been given to ster lization. A four-year plan (1973-76) with demographic objectives aims at a gross reproduction rate of about 1.1 by the year 2000. The Tunisian Family Planning Association (ATFP) has an aggressive programme to disseminate information, and has also undertaken a UNESCO-financed project to interpret population and family planning information into the curricula in Secondary Schools and Colleges. 12/

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9/ Gabon, South Africa, Lesotho, Egypt, Tunisia.

10/ World Population Growth Pattern 1976 (Compiled by the International Demographic Data Center).

11/ Manual on Child Development, Family Life, Nutrition, UNECA/ATRCW,1978.

12/ Association Tunisienne du Planning Familial (1976)

148. Mauritius reported that the practice of Family Planning is fairly widespread. By the end of 1978, the percentage of women of child bearing age using the services had risen to 60 per cent. Botswana provides Family Planning Services as part of the programmes for the promotion of better health for women. There are plans to expose as many women as possible to information and services. At the present time, an estimated 12.5 per cent of women of reproductive age practise contraception. Senegal reported that even in urban areas only a few women have access to Family Planning Services. The services have not yet reached the rural areas.

149. The low level of the services as reported by these countries in their replies to the questionnaire indicates that the majority of women, especially those in the rural areas and urban fringes, are not making use of the services due to a number of reasons which will be discussed under the section on "Obstacles."

## D. Health and Nutrition Education

150. Health and nutritional needs are closely interrelated. Poor nutrition leads to more frequent and longer illnesses. In this connexion Health and Nutrition education may constitute an important method for combating illness and disease. A number of countries have programmes on health and nutrition.

151. In Rwanda, the improvement in the quality of nutrition is promoted with the assistance of UNDP. In Libya, facts about nutrition and special diets are taught in schools. Mauritius provides health and nutrition education through radio and television and talks at the village level. Botswana reported that women of poor nutritional status are identified and supported through intensive education and supplementary feeding programmes of the maternal and child health services.

152. Madagascar stated that there is currently a fight against communicable diseases and malnutrition. Women's groups have undertaken the responsibility to spread nutrition education to the rural population. There exists a "Centre Récupération Nutritionelle" which teaches mothers the use of local foods. Kenya, Mauritania and Senegal have programmes in health and nutrition education.

153. While several countries are making special attempts to train more people in the health field, not much attention is being paid to train nutritionists to assist Governments to plan their nutritional programmes. One notable exception is the PAD/ATRCW/UNICEF program in Cameroon training intermediate level nutritionists for Francophone countries.

## E. Obstacles to Progress

154. Several factors, both internal and external, impact the health situation of women in the Africa Region. In remote rural areas women lack access to health services and rely on frequently inadequate traditional remedies. Beliefs in sorcery and taboos affect the ways in which people regard and utilise health services. Lack of education, formal and non-formal, is a barrier between the women and the health services. Frequently they are unaware of the existence of the health services. Financial constraints keep many poor rural and urban women from visiting medical facilities or buying medicines, which are often imported and expensive. Constraints are particularly prevalent in female-headed households. Unemployment and low wage rates force many women into prostitution which poses a serious threat to their health from venereal disease.

155. Added to these obstacles are the problems of infertility or over-infertility source of woe to many women in the Africa Region; it breaks down many marriages and leads many women to regard themselves as worthless. Although it was not given place in the questionnaire, it is a problem in Africa which stands as an obstacle to the health progress of some women. Other women suffer immensely with over-fertility. In many areas women still try to prevent or terminate unwanted pregnancies by traditional methods whose efficacy ranges from ineffective at best to mortal at worst. Ignorance of Family Planning Services is a basic cause of recourse to these methods. Even in areas where such services are available false rumours about some of the methods prevent some women from using them.

156. Other women who abstain from the services do so for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is the traditional value on fertility which obliges women to bear children whether or not the family can provide for them. Women also refrain from using scientific methods of birth control because of religious reasons and objections from their husbands. According to Perdita Huston, although many of the women wanted to limit the number of their pregnancies for both economic and health reasons, they said that they were not free to make the decisions on their own. They acknowledged that their anxiety about being thought infertile (and thus worthless as women) as well as their

fear of the reactions of their husbands or other family members them back from taking advantage of family planning services - where such services were in fact available." 13/ Thus negative male attitudes and women's self-image prevent women from controlling their own bodies.

157. Large families pose a serious threat to the health of women. Frequent pregnancies and large families put a severe constraint on the family budget thus constituting a serious cause of malnutrition among many women and children. Proper water supply, waste disposal and sanitation facilities are also vital to the health of women and children in the Region.

158. Increases in the number of doctors, hospitals and other medical personnel will not solve the health problems. All the other factors mentioned in this section combined with an intense desire to solve the hunger problem should form the basis of action for the future.

## F. Plan of Action for the Future

159. To eradicate malnutrition and famine, increased food production is required in the Region, through large-scale farming, improved communications, increased agricultural development by the use of modern technology, and allocation of a greater proportion of national resources to agricultural development. The FAO Africa Regional Food Plan is an important strategy in this realm. Substantial attention must be paid to improving women's agriculture.

160. At the International Conference on Women and Food, 1978, it was noted that "The success of any developing country's strategy to eliminate hunger and malnutrition may hinge on whether it utilizes the energies of women, the hitherto largely hidden but dynamic force in so many Third World survival economies." It was further noted that "many development strategy leaders are concluding that it will be only by the full participation of women in food production and marketing that the world can hope to eliminate poverty and hunger in the near future." 14/

161. Whilst increase in food could reduce malnutrition and improve health generally, food production presents a great opportunity for local industry, trading and job opportunities in both the urban and rural areas.

13/ Perdita Huston, Third World Women Speak Out, (New York, 1979), 74.

14/ The International Conference on Women and Food, Vol. II, p. 202.

African Governments should direct attention to the education of women and give them relevant training to participate fully in development projects. Suggested areas of concentration identified at the International Conference include:

1. Indigenous food projects;
2. Appropriate technology;
3. Alternative organisational approaches such as cooperatives;
4. Increase in efficiency of traditional food systems.

162. In planning food, health and nutrition programmes, governments should consider the participation of women professionals. Replies to questionnaire reveal that almost no women are in planning or policy-making levels in the health sector (Mauritius and Libya reported 0 per cent and Tunisia, one per cent).

163. Since in times of scarcity, women and children are more vulnerable to malnutrition, it is important that women place more emphasis on areas of food production and preservation. 15/

164. At every opportunity and at every level, in hospitals, in women's friendship organisations, at conferences, women should be encouraged and assisted to produce food through backyard gardening and in the fields. The crops to be grown should relate to their health and nutritional needs.

165. High population growth rates slow the pace of development in the Region. Thus the high fertility in the region should also be controlled through more campaigning for the use of family planning services. The attack should also be directed at men. Women in the Region have asked, "why do women have to use all the contraceptives?" 16/

166. The development of contraceptives and the large part of efforts to regulate fertility by scientific means have not explored the full range of possibilities to regulate male fertility. In this way, the development of contraceptives has in a way increased the burden on women who have to take their consequences, good and bad.

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15/ World Plan of Action, Para. 109

16/ Huston, Third Women Speak Out, p. 76.

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16/ Huston, Third Women Speak Out, p. 76.

The time has come to control the fertility of both men and women. Sex education, Family-life Studies, Health and Nutrition Education all must be taught to both girls and boys; men and women, in schools, in clubs, co-operatives and Parent-Teacher Associations.

167. The example of the Zambian Women's Brigade is worth citing. The Brigade has embarked on the formation of clubs to encourage vegetable growing and poultry keeping, and has also encouraged women's farming either through co-operative societies or individually. It has undertaken numerous other activities to promote women and children's health.17/

## C. Conclusion

168. The health situation of women and children has undergone some improvements in the last ten years, yet the mortality rate remains high. One iteresting observation, as illustrated by Table 14 is that women are still in the lead in life expectancy. What factors account for this longer life have not been determined. The fact still remains that a lot more is needed to be done to assure women better health for themselves and for their children; sick, hungry children cannot grow into a working force of strong and intelligent men and women needed to develop a country. To this end the interrelated factors of employment, education and health play a vital role. The future of the Region depends on the involvement of women in all aspects of life.

17/ Report on the Development of the Status of Zambian Women, Republic of Zambia, pp. 4-5.

## CHAPTER 4

## POLICY FORMULATION, PLANNING AND MONITORING

169. This chapter examines the critical system of institutional arrangements and processes whereby Government policy with regard to the condition of women and the advancement of their status is formulated; what plans and strategies are prepared; measures and legislation designed and carried out; and how progress is monitored.

### A. Targets and Strategies

170. Information from the replies to the questionnaire indicate that most Governments have initiated programmes to improve the situation of women. While some Governments have devoted separate sections to the advancement of women, others have general plans to cover both men and women. Some of the objectives of the World Plan of Action have already been achieved in some countries while in others they have only been partially achieved.

171. Mauritius reported that the current National Development Plan (1975-1980) for Social and Economic Development puts emphasis on creation of additional jobs. Most of the jobs created in the industries in the Export Processing Zone go to women. Free education at all levels has been introduced since January 1979 and non-formal education has been intensified. More attention has been paid to the Material Child Care Division of the Ministry of Health.

172. Chapter 28 of the Development Plan has been devoted to women and it recognizes the need to make fuller use of their potential in all spheres of economic and social activity. The following measures are being initiated to redress the social and institution factors which discriminate against them:

1) a comprehensive review of legislation on women's rights;
2) The "Mauritius Alliance of Women" which groups women's associations, Governmental and non-governmental organisations has been set up in order to review and monitor progress in the improvement of the status of women.

173. In Mauritania, between 1976 and 1977, several centres have been set up for training women. Measures have been taken to involve women in development programmes; to revise all documents which contain discriminatory elements against women. In 1975, the Government ratified the Convention on the political rights of women.

174. Although Botswana has no separate sections devoted to women in its current Development Plan, it has emphasised increasing the involvement of women in education, professional activities, adult literacy classes, craft classes, construction of hostels for working girls in towns and creches for working mothers.

175. Egypt has no separate section in the National Plan devoted to the advancement of women. However, in 1975, a national policy for women's development in the cultural, social and economic field was formulated by the Government. This policy followed closely the recommendations of the World Plan including the minimum objectives set out in paragraph 46. The policy recognised the importance of women's participation in development on equal terms with men as well as in the promotion of peace. It identified the need to give women the necessary support to enable them to overcome problems and obstacles accumulated from the past. The policy dealt with the following fields: Law, Education, Employment, Economic Development, Health, Culture and Mass Communication. Development of rural women; literacy programmes and Family Planning have been identified as priority programmes.

176. The 1976-1980 Transformation Plan of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahariya includes the following objectives:

a) An increase in the number of girls enrolled in schools at various educational levels and in particular at the compulsory educational stage (nine years).

b) The restriction of the teaching profession in the primary stage to women.

c) The admission of about 2,200 female students each year into teacher training institutions in order to meet the female teaching staff requirements and to enable girls' schools to have an exclusively female teaching staff, and to cater for the expected increase in the number of girls arising out of the

implementation of the legislative act making education complusory up to the end of the preparatory stage.

177. Libya hopes that at the end of the 5 year plan, there will be:

- 24 nurseries providing services for working women;
- 2[illegible] Community Centres to stimulate social, health and cultural awareness;
- 10 hostels for students;
- 2 hostels for female delinquents who will receive social and religious guidance with training in vocational skills;
- Certain appointments will be restricted to women only.

178. In its five-year Development Plan of July 1977 - June 1981, the Republic of Senegal has earmarked the following activities for women:

a) Literacy classes;
b) Reduction of women's work-load through the introduction of time-saving devices;
c) Day-care centres for children;
d) Village clinics and rural maternity homes;
e) Training for women leaders;
f) Establishment of a Secretariat for Women Affairs;
g) Institution of a national day for women.

179. Madagascar and Tunisia both stated that their national plan do not devote any sections especially to women since their constitutions contain equal provisions for both men and women. Tunisia added that there are, however, a few programmes in mother and child education which are run for women specially.

180. Although Swaziland has not directly devoted any sections to women in its Second National Development Plan, it plans to carry out a number of programmes to benefit women. Within the context of integrated rural development, the Government has plans to expand economic opportunities, to improve communication links and provide water supplies. The health programme comprises investment in rural clinics which are the focuses for curative services. 1/

181. Kenya stated that various strategies and programmes have been set into motion with a view to achieving the goals of the Decade for Women and the minimum objectives of the World Plan of Action. These include Harambee self-help projects; Family Life Training Centres; craft development and other women's programmes. The Kenya Development Plan of 1979/83 has the overall goal of "Alleviation of Poverty." The plan takes into consideration the proposed programmes and resources of the Women's Bureau (including its research findings) as well as other agencies whose contribution towards the

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1/ Government of Swaziland, Second National Development Plan, (1973-1977)

welfare of women has been valuable. The Government of Kenya, according to its reply, has fulfilled the Minimum Objectives of the World Plan of Action to a large extent.

182. Laudable as all these targets and strategies may be, no indications were given by the Governments, with the exception of Mauritius, as to how to monitor and measure progress. Some of the Plans are very recent and progress cannot be easily measured. It is, however, very important to state that inthe future, what has been achieved should be mentioned supported by dates and figures.

## B. NATIONAL MACHINERIES

183. Between 1963 and 1972, various United Nations Resolutions 2/ and Conferences 3/ on African Women have urged Governments to establish national machineries in the form of National Commissions on Women and Development, and Women's Bureaux, to assure the full integration of women in development. The establishment of these machineries would allow Governments, Women's Organisations, trade Unions and other interested parties access to data and information on women's participation in any activity and would disseminate information through mass media and other means. The machineries would gather information from relevant Government Departments and other places. They would also review women's participation in the over-all national activities.

184. Many Governments, in line with the Rabat Recommendations (1971) 4/ have set up special bodies for the advancement of women and their integration in development. In some cases the machineries are purely governmental in nature; in others they exist as women's organizations which receive subvention from the government. In some cases functions of the machinery are very broad in scope, dealing with many aspects of women's integration in development.

185. As of now, almost all countries of the Region have established some kind of machinery to deal with women'saffairs. Table 19 illustrates the present tally. However, many of these machineries are still acting more as cultural and political bodies than as technical organs able to make recommendations to be considered seriously in the national planning process.

186. The Ghana National Council on Women and Development is an outstanding example in the Region. The Council aims to raise the standard of living in Ghana on a broad, national basis by bringing into the productive sector of the economy the unskilled, the majority of whom are women and to integrate

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2/ ECOSOC Resolutions: 961 F(XXXVI), July 1963;
1068 D(XXXIX), July 1965;
1209 (XLII), May 1967;
1682 (LII), June 1972.

3/ Lomé, 1964, Accra 1968; Addis Ababa 1969, Rabat 1971, Libreville, 1971.

4/ UNECA Women's Programme, National Commissions on Women and Development and Womens Bureaux (1973), pp. 15-17.

women in the development process at all levels.

The functions of the Council among other things are:

a) To advise Government generally on all matters relating to the full integration of women in national development at all levels;

b) To examine and evaluate the contribution of women in the economic, social and cultural fields; and so to advise Government as to the specific areas where participation of women may be steengthed or initiated;

c) To study the effects of customary beliefs, prejudices and practices on advancement of women in the educational, political and economic fields and to report to Government from time to time;

d) To develop plans and proposals for the establishment of large-scale non-formal education and training for the purpose of raising living standards in the rural and urban communities and eradicating illiteracy;

e) To serve as the official national body for co-operating, co-ordinating and liaising on matters relating to the status of women. 5/

The Ghana NCWD functions as both a Commission and a Bureau. There are cases where the Bureau operates within the Commission to provide background information and to ensure that policies and decisions are implemented.

187. At the present time the Region has nine Bureaux 6/ and six Commissions. 7/

188. Other countries 8/ have Ministries headed by women. There are also the countries which have no autonomous national machineries to function along those lines described above. Table 19 displays what each country has and when such machinery was established.

## C. The Data Base

189. According to the Secretary General of the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women, "one of the specific mandates of the Conference is to pull out statistical evidence of the multi-faceted productive role of women, particularly in the informal, domestic and agricultural sectors of our economies." She noted further "that both developed and developing societies have failed to make full and accurate calculations in this area." 9/

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5/ National Council on Women and Development. Annual Report 1975/76 page 5.
Central African Republic, Gabon, Ghana,

6/ Lesotho, Mali, Niger, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya.

7/ Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Sudan, Senegal, Togo, Ivory Coast,

8/ Senegal, Togo, Ivory Coast.

9/ Agency for Public Information. News Release, 27 September 1979.

190. In the preparation of this paper it became clear that most Governments do not have accurate data to demonstrate to what extent women are involved in the development of their countries. Some Governments, however, are now trying to collect data on women in various aspects of national endeavour.

191. In Mauritius, according to the definition currently in use, "The head of a household is the one who earns the highest income and is thus defined as head of a household." 10/ This definition conflicts with the traditional acceptance of the man as the head of a household.

192. Although Botswana mentioned an Employment Survey carried out in August 1977, the reply did not contain any reliable data on women. Breakdowns by sex were not made in data collection. Libya stated that studies have been conducted on divorce and high cost of bride prices. Statistics on working women and female education already exist.

193. In Kenya the Women's Bureau has done significant work in collecting data on women. Data is currently being processed from a national survey of women's groups started in 1977, covering 5000 groups mainly in the rural areas. A Bibliography on Women of Kenya is nearing completion. Senegal and Ghana are also compiling directories on women.

194. It should be noted that many more countries are undertaking some studies into the condition of women, the results of which may become available by the end of the Decade.

## D. Participation of Women in the Planning Process

195. Some of the countries replied to the Questionnaire that the participation of women in planning is very limited. A complete absence of women at the planning level was indicated by others. Still others stated that women participate without indicating the extent or nature of such participation.

196. Mauritania replied that women have not been fully involved in national activities. They enumerated nine women in influential national positions. Libya reported that both men and women are entitled to undertake social and economic planning and policy-making acitivities, but supplied no figures for substantiation.

197. Tunisia stated that women are well represented in the National Assembly and in Municipal Councils. According to one source, among predominantly Muslim societies, Tunisia sets a bright expample in providing the legal basis for the integration of women into national life. 11/

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10/ Reply to Questionnaire.
11/ Third Women Speak Out. Op.Cit., page 3.

198. Although the replies to the Questionnaire state that women's organisations play important roles in developmental activities of their countries, yet in none of the replies was it mentioned that their assistance is required when it comes to high level national planning, not even when the issue concerns women.

## E. Obstacles to Progress

199. According to Kenya's reply to the Questionnaire the main obstacle to increased participation of women in the planning process of higher levels is the colonial legacy of not encouraging top level services from women however qualified.12/ Although this observation may be valid to some extent, it raises the question why women in uncolonised countries have no access either to the planning level. Kenya further noted that this colonial inheritance is reinforced by traditional customs which assume male supremacy from the family unit to the societal level.

200. Women themselves have been so socialized into accepting their dependent status that they avoid careers that have been male-dominated. Lack of confidence deters many from accepting posts of responsibility. The low educational status of women contributes to the present situation, and as Mauritius hopefully stated "increased educational facilities and arousal of public opinion will improve the situation." 13/

201. On obstacles to data collection, it was reported that the exercise is difficult due to lack of technical personnel, funds and transportation. Lack of understanding of the importance of data was also mentioned.

202. Regarding national machineries, inadequate funds and lack of expertise were mentioned as potent obstacles. Most countries expressed the wish to received assistance from International Organisations in the form of training for staff engaged in women's programmes.

## F. Plan of Action for the Future

203. In response to this section of the questionnaire, Egypt stated that natural evolution and momentum are likely to improve conditions; it stated that Trade Unions will be important vehicles for integrating women into the planning process. Libya and Kenya maintained that grassroot campaigns and mass media education can help to eradicate prejudices against women.

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12/ Kenya reply to the Questionnaire.

13/ Mauritius reply to the Questionnaire.

204. Although Mauritius reported that the present situation of women's involvement at the planning level "is due to the fact that they joined the service with qualifications equal to men's only lately", there is a large number of women with qualifications to enable them to participate fully at the planning level in the country.

205. It therefore behoves women's machineries and other organisations to put pressure on Governments to establish targets and/or quotas for women at all planning levels. Nominations could be made to Governments based strictly on competence and dedication.

206. Women's participation in trade unions is still rudimentary. Entry points should be discovered for future participation.

On statistics and data collection National Machineries should not be solely responsible but should act as a catalyst to other organs, particularly statistical bureaux.

207. Finally, Governments should be urged to plan programmes for women, with women not only as beneficiaries but also as contributors.

## G. Conclusion

208. Although the participation of women at the planning level is still low, the establishment of a large number of national machineries in the Region is an indication that African Governments have recognised the role women can play in the social, economic and cultural development of their countries. Many of these machineries are doing good jobs for women through several programmes relevant to their needs. The absence of quantitative data in the replies indicates that all is not well in this area. Action is therefore needed to collect data on women since developers and planners depend on data for their projections. In collecting data, women's dual roles should be recognised. If the problems of the Africa Region must be solved then women must be given the chance in planning to solve them.

## CHAPTER 5

## SOCIAL AND LEGAL STATUS

209. New directions in this area can be discerned since 1975. The consciousness of many women and men has been raised with regards to the domestic and economic roles of women.

In employment and education statutes and proclamations have declared equal access and opportunities for women. New laws have been passed and outmoded laws unfourable to women are being reformed.

210. Despite these new developments, the powers of decision and administration continue to be concentrated in the hands of men. Women are still plagued by numerous cultural constraints based on taboos, superstitions, religious beliefs and even misinterpretations of religious tenets. At this crucial juncture women must identify those practices which demean and lower their social status and take action to eradicate them.

### A. General Legislative or Constitutional Provisions which Guarantee Equal Rights of Women and Men and Prohibit Discrimination on the Grounds of Sex

211. All the countries which replied to this section of the Questionnaire documented their answers with the relevant legislative and constitutional provisions. All the provisions cited do not discriminate between citizens of either sex.

212. Women are employed under the same conditions of service as men and are eligible for full pension benefits, although the conditions are not uniform in all countries. Several countries provide maternity benefits with half or full pay to women for periods ranging between two to four months. (See Table 8). In the area of education, all children irrespective of sex are guaranteed equal instruction and facilities. In politics, women have the vote: they are eligible to stand for elections and be elected to any post in Government.

213. It is not possible to quote the laws from all the replies to the Questionnaire to support these claims. However, extracts from the law of Togo are cited as an example.

214. "The Constitution of April 14, 1961 does not discriminate between citizens of either sex. Thus, in Article 4, it provides: 'All Togolese nationals of 21 years of age and over may vote, enjoying their civil and political rights."

Article 10 of the same Constitution affirms that everyone has the right to employment. The electoral law of March 1, 1961 declares that citizens of both sexes, 23 years of age and enjoying legal competency, are eligible to be elected to the National Assembly (article 7). Equality between men and women is guaranteed even more explicitly by the Constitution of 5 May 1963, which states in article 6 that all Togolese are legally equal, "without distinction as to sex, ancestry, race, language, faith, or opinion."

215. The Constitution of 1963 declares that work is a right and a duty for everyone and that no one may be discriminated against because of his origins, beliefs, or opinions. (Sex, however, is not included). It proclaims that whoever works has the right to equitable remuneration. 1/

216. In general the written laws cited do not discriminate against women. Yet in practice, discrimination persists. However, there are still areas in which laws can be revised to protect the full interests of women. So-called "protective" legislation enacted to protect women from entering certain occupations such as underground work and night jobs may be discriminatory in that they restrict job opportunities for women. The choice should be left to the women to make.

217. If the statutory laws have not been able to establish equality between men and women, it is mainly due to customary law which still exerts potent influence in African systems of laws. There is the imported law which came from the colonial masters; there are the customary laws which regulate the various ethnic groups that make up the Region, then there are the religious laws which command power in some parts. African countries' laws are frequently made up of civil law (often unrevised from colonial law) and customary law, which may be ethnic or religious in origin. All these laws operate at the same time and their interrelated influences have been responsible for slowing down the progress of women's emancipation in the Region.

## B. CIVIL LAW

218. Under this item are discussed marriage rights which cover:

a) Rights to retain family name;
b) Property rights;
c) Inheritance rights;
d) Equal rights during marriage;
e) Divorce and separation;
f) Parental rights.

219. Rights to retain family name: Based on the Questionnaire replies there are no legislative provisions which enjoin a woman to give up her

1/ CSDHA, Law and the Status of Woman (New York: 1978), p.296.

family name for that of her husband when she marries. In Zaire, Article 8 of law No. 73/022 of 22 July 1973 stipulates that a married woman keeps her own name. She however has the right to use her husband's name. In fact, in many African societies, women do retain their own family names when they marry (in Ethiopia, for example). The use of the husband's family name arrived with colonialism and Christianity.

Property Rights

220. In Kenya, the Married Woman's Property Act gives the married woman the right to acquire, hold and dispose of separate property as if she were a "female sole". On dissolution of her marriage therefore she is entitled to her separate property. In case of a divorce, the property acquired jointly by the husband and wife is divided equally between them. In Egypt a married woman's rights to property were accorded to her with the advent of Islam centuries ago. 2/

In Mauritius special legislation exists which enables the wife to retain full capacity to deal with her properly (Ordinance 50 of 1949).

221. Under apartheid in South Africa, "Women are virtually perpetual minors under African Customary Law. They cannot own property in their own right, inherit or act as the guardian of their children. They cannot enter into contracts, sue or be sued without the aid of their male guardian. Regardless of their age and marital condition, women are always subject to the authority of men."3/ This is how customary law is interpreted and applied by the South African courts, a distortion of women's position within the rural areas.

222. Swaziland stated that under the law women are minors. The reply did not indicate under what specific areas women are minors; Zaire and Benin also reported that inequalities exist in this domain, but did not spell them out. Other countries 4/ said that both married and unmarried women enjoy full legal capacity with regard to their properties.

Inheritance Rights

223. The different types of marriage which exist in the legal [illegible] the inheritance rights of both men and women. Frequently women who marry under the customary law or Muslim legal codes are subjected to unjust treatment when their husbands die intestate.

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2/ Ibid., p. 36.
3/ Beinstein, For their Triumphs and for their Tears, p. 20.
4/ Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guinea, Ivory Coast

224. For example, in Sierra Leone, if a woman dies intestate leaving a husband, the whole of the estate goes to him. If a woman dies intestate leaving a husband and children, the husband shall take half of the estate and the children the other half. If a man dies intestate leaving a widow and children or issue, the widow shall be entitled to one third of the estate and children or issue the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ equally between them. 5/

225. In Mauritania, when the man dies intestate, the wife gets one half his property, if the wife dies intestate he gets two-thirds of the property. In Gambia, under customary laws, the wife is not entitled to any property when the husband dies. Similarly, under customary laws in Ghana, the position of the widow is very insecure. "She has no absolute right in any portion of her deceased husband's self-acquired property, though it is true that by her many duties in the home she contributes in no small way to the well-being of the husband during his life time. After helping the husband to acquire property taking care of him in times of illness etc., she is left with nothing on his death but a mere doubtful right of residence in her deceased husband's self-acquired house plus some maintenance which is very rarely given." 6/

226. According to one reply, the reason for the man always getting a larger share is that "the man's responsibility as the family breadwinner and provider is taken into account." 7/ However, now when a large number of women are heads of households and contribute equally to the family budget, it is submitted that all inheritance laws which discriminate against women should be reviewed and revised.

Equal Rights during Marriage

227. Both monogamous and polygamous marriages are found in Africa. There are discriminatory elements for wives in both situations. A wife in a polygamous household cannot see her husband everyday. She may be "weekly" or "monthly", that is to say, during the time period allotted to her, she cooks the meals and shares conjugal bed with her husband. In many polygamous societies, there is a period of sexual abstinence, for the wife, for one to two years after childbirth. The husband is of course free to have intercourse with other wives during this time. There is no specific limit on the number of wives in a traditional polygamous marriage; in the Muslim societies the maximum is four (although the Qu'ran says all must be treated equally).

228. Not all wives under polygamous marriages enjoy their position. In many instances they suffer from neglect; rivalries and petty jealousies are common among women in polygamous marriages. In spite of the disadvantages of this kind of marriage, according to one source, the female populace appears

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5/ International Planned Parenthood Federation, Family Welfare Laws in Ten African Countries (London: 1979), p. 27.

6/ Akua Kuenyehia, "Women and Family Law in Ghana" (unpublished research paper).

7/ Libya reply to Questionnaire.

to support it and consider that as long as economic power lies largely with men the institution is necessary as it helps otherwise disadvantaged women.8/ Clearly it is an area that needs further study.

229. Another situation unfavourable to women is "disguised polygamy," the situation in ostensibly monogamous society where a man marries under civil law and is legally entitled to only one wife but illegally takes another wife under customary law. Although many African women are victims of this situation and suffer emotionally thereby, not many women are brave enough to sue their husbands. The law usually looks on in silence.

230. In an attempt to check these practices, the example of Guinea (Conakry), whose population is predominantly Muslim, is interesting. By the Law 004/AN/1968, polygamy was abolished and made an offence.9/ Although the practice may not be totally eradicated, such legislation may reduce its high incidence.

231. Table 20 illustrates the minimum age for marriage for men and women. In almost all cases the girls' age is lower. The minimum age for marriage for girls as stipulated in the law books is too low. In practice, however, schooling is affecting the marriage age of girls and many girls do not marry young these days. Early marriage has already been mentioned in Chapter 2 as an obstacle to the progress of women in education.

232. On registration of marriages, it became clear from the replies to the questionnaire that marriages contracted under the customary law are not compulsorily registrable. For data collection purposes, it should be compulsory for all marriages to be registered. To avoid discrimination between the different systems of marriages, there should be a common register for all marriages.

233. Only a few countries still punish women who engage in adultery. In Benin the (A337 Penal Code) punishes only the woman. In Kenya, a husband is entitled to claim damages from the adulterer but the woman cannot. Libyan law no longer differentiates between men and women; both now may be found guilty of the offence.

## Divorce and Separation

234. On this issue Libya and Mauritania state that divorce is a male prerogative. Although many recriminations have been expressed against the husband's right to divorce, this right can be largely qualified on several grounds. Islamic law protects the woman's right to terminate the marriage

8/ Law and the Status of Women, p. 190.

9/ Reply to the questionnaire.

by entitling her to request legal separation and requiring the magistrate to grant her request if, in his opinion, it is legally justified. A woman can ask for divorce only when the husband is not discharging his obligations.

235. From the replies it is clear that Muslim women in the Region live in fear of their husbands arbitrarily divorcing them. To mitigate this, Egypt has recently enacted a law to reduce the high divorce rate: "If a husband wants to take a new wife, he has to obtain the consent of his first wife. Failure to do so entitles the aggrieved wife to sue for divorce. The divorce, however, entitles the wife to the possession of the family home."10/

## Parental Rights

236. "Do women have equal rights and responsibilities with men, whether married or not, in matters relating to their children?" Some countries 11/ simply said yes to the question.

237. Others 12/ reported that women do not have the same rights and responsibilities. Egypt said that "a husband, even poor, is obliged to support his wife and children. The wife has no obligation to support her husband nor her children, even herself." This seems to be the rule in many African societies. But in practice, most women are responsible for the financial needs of their children.

## C. Nationality

238. The question of nationality for married women affects that group of people, especially the educated women and traders, who are mobile and probably urbanised and are therefore likely to come into contact with foreigners.

239. Libya stated that a woman may lose her citizenship by marrying a foreigner and acquiring his nationality but even in such a case the Nationality Law endeavours to facilitate reacquisition if there should be a change in circumstances. However, children acquire Libyan nationality at birth from the father or mother irrespective of the place of birth.

240. In Mauritania, as per Islamic law, a woman cannot marry a non-Muslim. If she marries a foreign Muslim, she may or may not keep her nationality. In Zaire, a married woman cannot transmit her nationality to her children but a single woman without a husband can transmit her nationality. An Ethiopian man retains his nationality upon marriage to a foreigner, while an Ethiopian woman married to a foreigner loses her nationality if she chooses the nationality of her husband.

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10/ Abdul Aleem Al-Abyad, "Blow struck for Women's Rights,", Egyptian Mail, 22 September 1979.
11/ Swaziland, Botswana, Cameroon, Mauritania,
12/ Benin, Egypt, Ivory Coast, Zaire.

241. Senegal, Benin, Cameroon, and Madagascar reported that marriage has no effect on the nationality of the woman.

242. In Tunisia, although marriage to a non-citizen does not affect the nationality of the woman, children have the nationality of the father.

243. Egypt stated that women have the right to transfer their nationality to children in two cases:

i) a child born in Egypt of an Egyptian mother and father of unknown nationality or status;

ii) a child born abroad of an Egyptian mother and unknown father if he chooses Egyptian nationality within a year after reaching adulthood and assumes Egypt as his country of residence.

244. It is obvious from these examples that women and men in the Region do not enjoy the same rights in this area of the law. This is an area in which equal rights should be legislated.

## D. Obstacles to Progress

245. Notwithstanding the fact that many old laws have been reformed and new laws enacted to enhance the legal status of women, their social status has not undergone much change:

a) There are conflicts and contradictions between customary and statutory law;
b) Customary and traditional values affect women's acceptance of certain practices;
c) Very few women have access to information on law and understand legal issues and their implications;
d) Financial constraints prevent women from seeking redress to injustices
e) Economic insecurity may force women to enter and remain in marriage against their will.
f) Religions interpretations subjugate women.

## E. Plan of Action for the Future

246. Throughout the preceding chapters, traditional attitudes and certain customary practices have been identified as obstacles to the advancement of women. Renewed strategies to fight these attitudes and practices are called for. In this area the role of women's groups cannot be overemphasised. At every opportunity, women leaders should bring up for discussion those social practices which are slowing down progress.

247. Women in positions with the media should seek to raise public consciousness with respect to women's questions; to develop women's self-confidence and a new sense of values. The slogan of the Zambian Women's Brigade "One woman teach one" needs to be adopted. A little education can go a long way to raise the status of a woman. There is a great need to identify all those customary laws which conflict with written laws, and to reconcile all of them to eliminate the contradictions.

248. The establishment of free legal aid could help some women seek redress to injustices they suffer them and to press for their rights. Governments should consider setting up Family Courts where family cases can be heard in camera.

## F. Conclusion and Recommendations

249. Several Governments have realised that the social and legal status of women must be improved in order to enable them to play their part in the development of their countries. Remaining inequalities should be eradicated; in particular:

a) Customary and civil law
b) New laws should be enacted to change certain public attitudes and behaviour injurious to women;
c) Law Reform Bodies should be established to review discriminatory elements in existing laws;
d) All marriages, regardless of spouse's citizenship, should be given same status and should be registrable;
e) Early marriages should be discouraged; the minimum age for marriage should be raised and compulsory primary education enforced;
f) Women and men should be informed and educated about their legal rights and social responsibilities. (Booklets on pertinent legal issues could be published and sold cheaply to meet the pocket of the average person); and finally,
g) Women of all classes and geographical areas should have access to legal redress of grievances.

CHAPTER 6

# POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE

## A. Equality of Political Rights

250. All the countries 1/ which responded to this section reported that woman enjoy equal political rights with men without any discriminiation; that they have the right to vote in all elections and public referenda and are eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; that they have the right to hold public office and exercise all public functions; that no differences whatsoever exist in legal and other provisions between men and women.

## B. Women's Participation in Political Life

251. In spite of the fact that women have same political rights as men to vote and to be voted into power, Table 21 shows that women participate mainly as voters; they have yet to make real progress in being elected or appointed to office. The situation, as presented by this Table, is akin to that in employment and education. The higher the levels of attainment, the fewer women represented. And almost invariably, the reasons that accounted for the low positions of women in employment and education equally account for their low participation in politics.

252. A study on voting behaviour has consistently found that an individual's educational level is the best predictor of politicization; that recent increases in the levels of education attained by women correlate with the increasing politicization 2/

253. Table 21 shows that not all women do exercise their right to vote. Their lack of participation may hinge on other issues which will be discussed under the section on obstacles.

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1/ Botswana, Cameroon, Egypt, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Libya, Mauritania, Swaziland, Zaire.

2/ Lynn B. Iglitzin and Ruth Ross, (editors), Women in the World, (New York: 1976), 178.

254. Despite the low participation of women in electoral and appointive politics, women have been very active in political struggles for independence; however, their contributions have not been well recognized in the aftermath. For example, in Zambia, during the independence movement, masses of women felled trees to block the roads to stop soldiers and police from going through to arrest activists, prepared food for Party Workers, staged demonstrations at Lusaka Airport to block the arrival of the Colonial Secretary, boycotted discriminatory shops, and burned marriage certificates in protest of colonial laws; others lost their lives in the nationalist cause. 3/

255. Algerian women were full participants in guerilla activities in the war for independence. They served as messengers, look-outs, nurses and even bombers in the countryside and in the city. 4/ And in South Africa, throughout the long years of resistance to apartheid women have played an important part alongside the men. In the liberation movement individual women have played outstanding roles as organisers, speakers and leaders. 5/

256. The time has now come for women to come out of the background and into top positions from which they can tackle their own immediate problems of jobs, education and health.

## C. International Cooperation and the Strengthening of International Peace

257. Table 22 illustrates the percentage of women in foreign affairs departments, and the diplomatic service at higher levels. It also indicates the percentage of delegates to Regional organizations meetings and other interregional meetings.

258. Even if the statistics furnished are reliable, the picture the table presents is similar to that in other areas. Progress for women is very slow. The importance of women's involvement in international affairs has not as yet been fully grasped by Governments. It appears, however, that the participation of women at this level hinges on how well they become involved in the politics of their countries. And this may depend not only on high educational and employment status, but also on political awareness by men and women and the will to dare on the part of women.

## D. Obstacles to Progress

259. Under this section the Questionnaire sought to identify those obstacles specific to women's participation in public life. The countries supplied similar responses to obstacles they previously cited with regard to Education Employment, and Health.

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3/ Report on the Development of the Status of Zambian Women, p.3.
4/ Iglitlin, Women in the World, op.cit., p. 234.
5/ Bernstein, For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears, op. cit., p. 43.

260. Zaire felt that the level of education of women is an obstacle. They also stated a general belief that women are too feeble to undertake political tasks. Egypt mentioned that politics requires aggressiveness considered unfeminine, and that women are too overburdened by home duties to enter political life.

261. Cameroon reported that women are ignorant of their roles and are not interested in politics. Kenya said that women lack self-appreciation and self-confidence in applying for highly competitive positions and that they are apathetic to what is going on. They said that, potential and active women lack interest in politics. Libya stated that the obstacles derive from customs and traditions.

262. This elaboration of obstacles to women's political participation says more about attitudinal barriers than, actual deficiencies women posses. The greatest part of the struggle may be to overcome male bias at women entering their inner sancta.

263. Legislation in itself cannot involve women into politics. Before women participate in the political life of their countries, their social status must be improved; such improvement hinges on meaningful education, economic independence and good health.

## E. Plan of Action for the Future

264. In an attempt to improve the participation of women, several countries reported measures being undertaken to involve women in public life. In Swaziland a Women's organization, The Lutsango Lwaka Ngwame, has been established to increase women's participation in national and local affairs. At these meeting centres, national, local and other affairs are discussed.

265. Zaire and Libya have been holding seminars to awaken women to their civic responsibilites. Egypt has plans to influence public opinion in favour of greater acceptance of women's role in political life through all available means. It has established a target of 30 seats for women in parliament. The Kenyan Government has appointed a number of Assistant Ministers among the women members of parliament.

266. Mauritius stated that it has no quota for women and that vacancies in the Government Service are filled by the Public Service Commission on the basis of qualifications. It stated further that the low participation of women at the higher levels of Government stems from the late entry of women and that the situation will definitely change with time.

267. In addition to all these measures being taken, National Machineries entrusted with the welfare of women should conduct a survey to determine how women themselves feel towards politics. Women's organizations, however small, need to go to places, particularly the rural areas, to speak and to teach. This will require leadership training which can come from the Regional Level, through an organization such as the African Training and Research Centre for Women, a section of the Economic Commission for Africa. Since its inception, the ATRCW has organised a number of seminars to raise the consciousness of women. What is needed now are special training programmes for women leaders to enable them to discharge their duties effectively. Many women leaders lack the know-how to reach other women, to inspire them to be and act.

F. Conclusion

268. It must be abundantly clear by now that the situation of women has undergone little change. The low participation of women in politics and in the public life of their countries depends on several factors which have been discussed in the preceeding chapters.

269. There are factors which are internal to women's condition and external or societal factors which interrelate to influence the advancement of women. Even though "preliminary studies of the situation of women have shown that the economic role and employment status of women constitute the most significant and central factor in respect to the advancement of women"6/ yet it appears education plays no mean role in determining the over-all status of women. Education brings with it associated factors such as openness to new ideas, higher socio-economic status, exposure to a greater range of options and in the family situation, leverage with the husband. Even the transition from illiteracy to literacy has been shown to influence child spacing.7/

270. Education can also break down deep-rooted barriers of tradition, custom and superstition. Some women seem to have realised that traditional male dominance, the idea of male superiority is the most disabling custom of all.8/

271. Now that the obstacles to the advancement of women are gradually coming to light, it seems appropriate to tackle the problems at the roots by taking the right measures. As reported in the replies to the Questionnaire, several countries are taking the necessary steps to improve the condition of women.

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6/ Guidelines to the preparation of this report.
7/ Study on the Interrelationship of the Status of Women and Family Planning, op.cit., pages 99-101.
8/ Third Women Speak Out. op. cit., p. 116.

It must be stated over and over again that the advancement of women does not benefit women alone but the future generations. This very important effect must not be ignored when decisions are being taken at the national and international level with respect to the integration of women in developmental processes.

ANNEX I:

STATISTICAL

ANNEX, TABLES 1-22

TABLE 1.

A Zambian Woman's day during the planting season

| | Time spent/hours* |
|---|---|
| Waking up in the morning at 05:00 hours | - |
| Walking to the field with baby on her back (1-2 km) | 0:50 |
| Ploughing, planting, hoeing until about 15:00 hrs (eats snack in field) | 9:50 |
| Collecting firewood and carrying it home | 1:00 |
| Pounding or grinding grain or legumes | 1:50 |
| Fetching water (1-2 km or more each day) | 0:75 |
| Lighting fire and cooking meal for family | 1:00 |
| Dishing out food-eating | 1:00 |
| Washing children, herself, clothes | 0:75 |
| Going to bed at about 21:00 hrs | - |
| Total | 16:00 |

TABLE 2.

Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| Hours of work | 15 hr |
| Hours of rest/eating | 1 hr |
| Hours of sleep | 8 hr |
| Total | 24 hr |

* The unit of participation is expressed as 1:00. For example, if 80% of the hours of labour in carrying water are women's work, the women's unit of participation is expressed as 0:80.

Source: The Data Base for Discussion on the Interrelationship between the Integration of women in development, their situation and Population Factors in Africa. E/CN.14/SW/37, May 1974.

TABLE 2

ACTUAL TIME DEVOTED TO FARM WORK BY AGE GROUP PER WORKING DAY

| | Age group 10 - 14 | Age group 15 - 59 | Age group 60 and above |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male workers | 65 per cent of the time | 90 per cent | 75 per cent |
| Female workers | 45 per cent of the time | 50 per cent | 65 per cent |

Source: A.K. Mitra, Integrated Development of the Agricultural Sectors, Sierra Leone.
(Resource Management and Farm Planning, Report of the Government of Sierra Leone, FAO, Rome 1971.)

TABLE 3

MEAN DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS PER HOUSEHOLD BY SEX OF HEAD AND PROVINCE*

| Province | Male Head | Female Head |
|---|---|---|
| Central | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Coast | 3.7 | 4.3 |
| Eastern | 3.2 | 3.5 |
| Nyanza | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| Rift Valley | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Western | 3.4 | 3.6 |

* Excludes pastoral and large farm areas.

Source: Integrated Rural Survey 1974-1975, (reprinted in Women in Kenya) July 1975.

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WITHIN THE HEALTH SECTOR OCCUPATIONS IN FOUR COUNTRIES, 1975-1978

| OCCUPATIONS | LIBYA | | MAURITIUS | | TUNISIA | | MADAGASCAR | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1975 | 1978 | 1975 | 1978 | 1975 | 1978 | 1975 | 1978 |
| Senior Personnel engaged in health sector policy formulation and plan preparation | - | - | 17.3 | 21.7 | 1 | 1 | 6.9 | - |
| Senior Administrators | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Specialists in gynecology and obstetrics | 2* | 2* | 12.5 | 8.3 | 7* | 8* | - | - |
| Specialists in other fields | 11* | 11* | 9.3 | 6.9 | 45* | 60* | 31.2 | - |
| General practitioners | 348* | 398* | 14.5 | 14.5 | 165* | 265* | 17.6 | - |
| Nurses | 2388* | 3474* | 62.0 | 61.5 | 2000* | 3000* | 33.6 | - |
| Para-medical personnel | - | - | 29.3 | 28.2 | 2000* | 3000* | 52.3 | - |
| Community welfare workers | - | - | 60.9 | 60.7 | - | - | 80.2 | - |
| Medical students | - | - | - | - | - | 500 | 35 | 35 |
| Others | - | - | - | - | - | 248* | - | - |

Source: Replies to questionnaire on implementation during the period 1975-1978 of the World Plan of Action.

* This indicates the absolute number rather than the percentage as supplied by the countries. The aggregate figure was not available.

TABLE 5

INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, LIBYA (by 1000's)

| Economic Activity | 1975 | | | 1976 | | | 1977 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | males & females | males | females | males & females | males | females | males & females | males | females |
| 1. Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing. | 115.5 | 100.5 | 15.0 | 114.9 | 99.6 | 15.3 | 116.3 | 100.7 | 15.6 |
| 2. Oil | 8.0 | 7.9 | 0.1 | 8.5 | 8.4 | 0.1 | 9.1 | 9.0 | 0.1 |
| 3. Mining and quarrying | 4.1 | 4.1 | - | 4.1 | 4.1 | - | 4.3 | 4.3 | - |
| 4. Manufacturing | 19.1 | 17.5 | 1.6 | 21.1 | 19.4 | 1.7 | 24.6 | 22.8 | 1.8 |
| 5. Electricity | 9.4 | 9.3 | 0.1 | 9.9 | 9.8 | 0.1 | 10.5 | 10.4 | 0.1 |
| 6. Building | 34.3 | 34.2 | 0.1 | 34.4 | 34.3 | 0.1 | 38.8 | 38.8 | 0.1 |
| 7. Trade | 40.8 | 40.5 | 0.3 | 43.6 | 0.3 | 45.8 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 0.3 |
| 8. Transport & Communications | 47.2 | 46.9 | 0.3 | 49.2 | 48.9 | 0.3 | 53.7 | 53.4 | 0.3 |
| 9. Financial Services | 6.1 | 5.7 | 0.4 | 6.5 | 6.0 | 0.5 | 7.0 | 6.3 | 0.7 |
| 10. Public Administration | 65.9 | 63.9 | 2.0 | 69.2 | 66.2 | 2.4 | 71.9 | 68.9 | 3.0 |
| 11. Teaching | 43.9 | 43.9 | 8.0 | 47.9 | 38.8 | 9.1 | 52.9 | 42.3 | 10.6 |
| 12. Health Services | 20.7 | 15.0 | 5.7 | 21.7 | 15.4 | 6.3 | 23.1 | 16.1 | 7.0 |
| 13. Other Services | 39.1 | 38.0 | 1.1 | 39.1 | 38.4 | 0.7 | 40.8 | 40.4 | 0.4 |
| Total | 454.1 | 419.4 | 340.7 | 470.1 | 433.2 | 36.9 | 458.8 | 458.8 | 40.0 |

Source: Lilya's reply to questionnaire on implementation during the period 1975-1978 of the World Plan of Action. 1979.

TABLE 6

WOMEN IN SALARIED EMPLOYMENT: KENYA
(as a percentage of the whole)

| | 1975 | 1978 |
|---|---|---|
| Salaried employees | 8.3 | 10.0 |
| Wage earners | 7.0 | 9.0 |
| Employees in professional, technical and managerial occupations | 5.8 | 7.0 |

Source: Reply to questionnaire on implementation of the World Plan of Action during the period 1975-1978.

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN MAJOR OCCUPATIONS,
KENYA AND GHANA (1971)

| | Professional, technical and related | Administrative and managerial | Clerical and related |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ghana | 22.9 | 4.9 | 19.4 |
| Kenya | 19.5 | 6.7 | 17.9 |

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics
Labour Statistics (Ghana) 1970 & 1971.

Employment and Earnings in the Modern Sector (Kenya) 1971.

Table from "African Women's Employment in the Modern Wage Sector" by Mrs. OLUBANKE AKERELE, ATRCW, 1979.

TABLE 8

MATERNITY PROTECTION FOR WOMEN IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES

| Countries | Duration Months/Days | Benefits | Other |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bénin | - | Benefits are paid. | Indications not clear in reply |
| Mauritius | - | Benefits are paid. | Indications not clear in reply |
| Zaïre | - | Benefits are paid. | Indications not clear in reply |
| Kenya | 2 months | Full pay | - |
| Uganda | 3 months | Full pay | - |
| Ghana | 3 months | Full pay | - |
| Mauritania | 14 months | Full pay | - |
| Libya | Leave of absence | No indication | Bonus on the occasion of first child. |
| Botswana | 3 months | Paid maternity | Indications not clear in reply |
| Zambia | - | - | Certain categories of women get paid maternity leave others receive nothing. |
| Ivory Coast | No indication | Full pay - half by Employer; half by insurance (this applies to women in the private sector) | For those in the Civil Service, the Employer pays full salary. |
| Swaziland | 12 weeks | No pay | In the civil service, women are entitled to six weeks maternity leave |
| Egypt | No indication | - | - |
| Cameroon | No indication | - | - |

Source: Replies to Questionnaire.

TABLE 9

PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS AND BOYS ENROLLED IN SCHOOL IN 1975

| COUNTRY | 6-11 years PRIMARY | | 12 - 17 years SECONDARY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | BOYS | GIRLS | BOYS | GIRLS |
| NORTH AFRICA | | | | |
| Egypt | 80 | 52 | 49 | 27 |
| Libya | 100 | 72 | 64 | 22 |
| Tunisia | 91 | 63 | 44 | 24 |
| Sudan | 38 | 20 | 25 | 12 |
| WEST AFRICA | | | | |
| Gambia | 37 | 18 | 21 | 8 |
| Ivory Coast | 76 | 47 | 60 | 29 |
| Togo | 97 | 53 | 62 | 25 |
| Upper Volta | 14 | 9 | 7 | 4 |
| EAST AFRICA | | | | |
| Ethiopia | 19 | 11 | 21 | 9 |
| Madagascar | 72 | 64 | 38 | 28 |
| Mauritius | 96 | 93 | 57 | 48 |
| Reunion | 100 | 100 | 84 | 94 |
| CENTRAL AFRICA | | | | |
| Angola | 68 | 43 | 24 | 10 |
| Cameroun | 90 | 78 | 53 | 32 |
| Zaire | 80 | 55 | 60 | 29 |
| Chad | 38 | 15 | 18 | 4 |
| SOUTH AFRICA | | | | |
| Botswana | 66 | 76 | 33 | 42 |
| Lesotho | 65 | 94 | 53 | 77 |
| South Africa | 84 | 86 | 76 | 72 |
| Swaziland | 75 | 75 | 59 | 55 |

Source: World's Children Data Sheet of the Population Reference Bureau Inc. International Year of the Child. 1979.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS AND WOMEN ENROLLED AT THE THREE LEVELS OF EDUCATION

| Country | FIRST CYCLE | | 2nd CYCLE | | 3rd CYCLE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1975/6 | 1978/9 | 1975/6 | 1978/9 | 1975/6 | 1978/9 |
| Kenya | 48 | 50 | 35 | 37 | 19 | 22 |
| | 3 - 15 years | | 16 - 20 years | | 21 above | |
| Mauritania | 48 | 48 | 45 | 47 | 12.8 | 16 |
| | 5 - 11 years | | 12 - 20 years | | Above 20 years | |
| Mauritania | 32.4 | 34.2 | 14.8 | 16.4 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| Libya | 46.11 | 47.11 | 22.32 | 23.61 | 17.57 | 19.29 |
| | 6 - 11 years | | 16 - 19 years | | 20 - 24 years | |
| Madagascar | 46.9 | - | 43.3 | - | 31.4 | - |
| | 6 - 10 years | | 11 - 17 years | | Above 18 | |
| Ghana | | | | | | |

Source: Replies to questionnaires.

TABLE 11

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

| Country | 1975/6 | | 1976/9 | | Type of training |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Madagascar | 0.7 | B | - | | Skills in industry (basic & higher) A |
| | 62.2 | C | | | Skills in agriculture (basic and higher) B |
| | 36.9 | | | | Entrepreneurial and managerial skills C (e.g. in trade and commerce, marketing, cooperative method) |
| Kenya | 10 | B | 30 | B | |
| | 5 | C | 10 | C | Other types of training D |
| | 20 | D | 30 | D | |

Source: Replies to questionnaire.

TABLE 12

INFANT MORTALITY RATES IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES
(Deaths under one year, per 1000)

| NORTH AFRICA | 1974 | 1977* | CENTRAL AFRICA | 1974 | 1977 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Morocco | 149 | 133 | Cameroun | 137 | 137 |
| Algeria | 86 | 142 | Chad | 160 | 165 |
| Tunisia | 110 | 125 | Central African Republic | 190 | 190 |
| Sudan | 120 | 141 | Gabon | 220 | 178 |
| | | | Zaire | 104 | 160 |

| WEST AFRICA | 1974 | 1977 | EAST AFRICA | 1974 | 1977 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mauritania | 187 | 187 | Rwanda | 137 | 127 |
| Senegal | 93 | 159 | Burundi | 150 | 140 |
| Mali | 123 | 190 | Zambia | 259 | 144 |
| Upper Volta | 182 | 182 | Madagascar | 102 | 102 |
| Benin | 110 | - | Mauritius | 65 | 46 |
| Niger | 200 | 200 | Tanzania | 189 | 125 |
| Guinea | 216 | 175 | Uganda | 160 | 136 |
| Sierra Leone | 146 | 136 | Kenya | 132 | 119 |
| Liberia | 137 | 148 | | | |
| Ghana | 156 | 115 | | | |
| Togo | 120 | 163 | | | |

| Africa has the world's highest infant mortality rate at 143 per 1000 | Other Countries | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Lesotho | 181 | 111 |

* World Population Data Sheet 1979
Rates pertain to 1976 or 1977 period.

Source: ECA Population Programme Centre, May 1974.

TABLE 13

LIFE EXPECTANCY BY GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF THE WORLD, BOTH SEXES COMBINED

| REGION | 1965 - 1970 Years of age | 1970 - 1975 Years of age | 1975 - 1978 |
|---|---|---|---|
| World | 53.1 | 55.5 | 60 |
| Africa | 43.3 | 45.9 | 47 |
| North America | 70.5 | 70.8 | 73 |
| Latin America | 60.2 | 62.5 | 62 |
| Asia | 52.2 | 55.2 | 57 |
| Europe | 70.9 | 71.7 | 72 |
| Occeania | 64.8 | 66.2 | 69 |
| Soviet Union | 70.3 | 70.9 | 70 |

Source: UN Demographic Year Book 1971 and UN Population Division 1970
1979 World Population Data Sheet.

TABLE 14

LIFE EXPECTANCY BY SEX IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES

| Country and Year | Males | Females | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tunisia 1975 | 56.5 | 57.5 | |
| Botswana 1970-1975 | 41.9 | 45.1 | Source: |
| Ethiopia 1970-75 | 36.5 | 39.6 | UN Demographic Year |
| Gambia 1970-75 | 38.5 | 41.6 | Book 1977. |
| Guinea 1970-75 | 39.4 | 42.0 | |
| Kenya 1970-75 | 46.9 | 51.2 | |
| Mali 1970-75 | 36.5 | 39.6 | |
| Mauritania 1970-75 | 37.0 | 40.1 | |
| Morocco 1970-75 | 51.4 | 54.5 | |
| Mauritius 1971-1973 | 60.68 | 65.3 | |

TABLE 15

MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY RATES IN 1976 (SENEGAL)

| Total No. of Births | Maternal Deaths | Still Born | Deaths from 1 - 7 days. | Deaths 1 - 4 years | Total No. of Deaths |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 96,930 | 282 | 2,946 | 479 | 4,926 | 10,779 |

Source: Reply to questionnaires (There was no breakdown by rural and urban population).

TABLE 16

GENERAL MORTALITY PATTERNS IN THE AFRICA REGION (1976)

20 or more deaths per 1,000

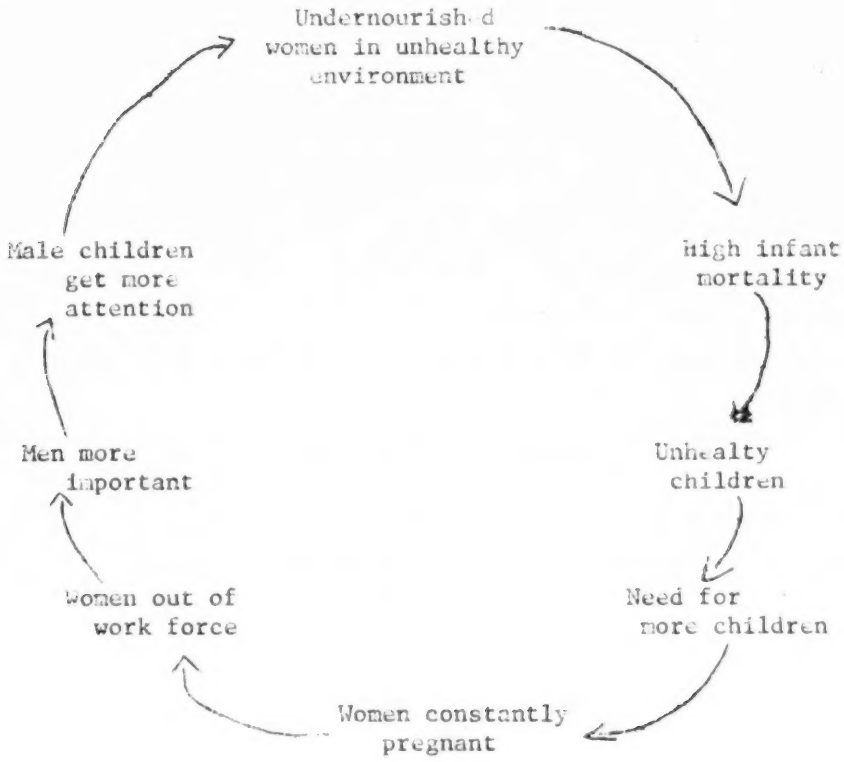
Majority of countries in West Africa and Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola, Madagascar, Rwanda, Mozambique.

10 - 19 deaths per 1,000

All other countries with Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia (Exceptions from West Africa).

TABLE 17

THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF FERTILITY, INFANT MORTALITY AND ECONOMIC STATUS




Source: Proceedings of the Seminar on Women in Development (Mexico City, June 15-18, 1975)

From: Women and World Development, page 168.

TABLE 13

AVAILABILITY OF FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

| Through Government Clinics and Doctors | | |
|---|---|---|
| Family Planning Association Services | | |
| Algeria | Mali* | Swaziland |
| Botswana | Mauritius | Tanzania |
| Cameroon* | Morocco* | Togo |
| Egypt | Nigeria* | Tunisia |
| Ethiopia | Rhodesia | Uganda |
| Gambia* | Senegal* | Zambia |
| Ghana* | Sierra Leone* | |
| Kenya | Sudan | |
| Lesotho | | |
| Madagascar | | |

| At Pharmacies | No Services | Plans for the Project |
|---|---|---|
| Gabon | Chad | Republic of Central Africa |
| Ivory Coast | Comores | Congo |
| Libya | Equatorial Guinea | Guinea Bissau |
| Malawi | Guinea* | Liberia* |
| Mauritania | | Mozambique |
| Rwanda | | Upper Volta* |
| Many of these countries have very limited services. | | |

* These countries attended a recent Conference on "Islam and Family Planning" held in Banjul, Gambia, October 27, 1979, where it was unanimously agreed that islam does not oppose family planning.
The Conference was organised by the Africa Region's International Planned Parenthood Federation.

Source: 1979 Wall Chart for Family Planning Services.

TABLE 19

SUMMARY TABLE OF INFORMATION ON TYPES OF NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT STATES MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

| COUNTRY | TYPE | | | | | | | | DATE OF CREATION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ministry | Commission | Bureau | Political organ | Committee | Council | Other | | | |
| 1. Algeria | | | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| 2. Angola | | | | ✓ | | | | | 1978 | |
| 3. Benin b/ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Botswana | | | | | | | | | 1978 | Formation of a National Body consisting of women groups |
| 5. Burundi | | | | ✓ | | | | | 1967 | |
| 6. Cape Verde a/ | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 7. Central African Empire | | | ✓ | | | | | | 1960 (UNECA) | |
| 8. Chad | | | | | | | | | 1962 | |
| 9. Comores a/ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Congo | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 11. Djibouti | | | | | | | | | 1963 | |
| 12. Egypt | | 1972 ✓ | | 1958 | | | | | 1972 1958 | There is also a Department of Women's Affairs |

| COUNTRY | TYPE | | | | | | | | DATE OF CREATION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ministry | Commission | Bureau | Political organ | Committee | Council | Other | | | |
| 13. Equatorial Guinea | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 14. Ethiopia | | | | | ✓ | | | | 1975 | Created to ensure mass political education |
| 15. Gabon | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 1972 ✓ | | | | | | |
| 16. Gambia | | | | | | ✓ | | | 1960 | |
| 17. Ghana | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | 1975 | |
| 18. Guinea | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 19. Guinea-Bissau | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 20. Ivory Coast | 1976 ✓ | | | | | | 1963 ✓ | | 1976 1963 | Association des jeunes ivoirienne created in 1963 |
| 21. Kenya | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | 1975 (bureau) | | | |
| 22. Lesotho | | ✓ | | | | | | | 1970 | |
| 23. Liberia | | | | ✓ | | | | | 1946 | |
| 24. Libya Arab Jamahiriya | | | | | | ✓ | | | 1970 | |
| 25. Madagascar | | | ✓ | | | | | | 1976 | |
| 26. Malawi a/ | | | | | | | | | | |

| COUNTRY | TYPE | | | | | | | | DATE OF CREATION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ministry | Commission | Bureau | Political organ | Committee | Council | Other | | | |
| 27. Mali | | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| 28. Mauritania | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | |
| 29. Mauritius | | | | | | | ✓ | | 1975 | |
| 30. Morocco | | | | | | | ✓ | | 1969 | |
| 31. Mozambique | | | | ✓ | | | | | 1973 | |
| 32. Niger | | | ✓ | | | | | | 1975 | |
| 33. Nigeria | | | | | | | ✓ | | 1974 | Ministerial department |
| 34. Rwanda | | | | | | | ✓ | | 1975 | |
| 35. Sao Tome and Principe | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36. Senegal | ✓ | | | | | | | | 1978 | |
| 37. Seychelles | | | | | | | | | 1978 | |
| 38. Sierra Leone | | | | | ✓ | | | | 1973 | Created for International Women's Year |
| 39. Somalia | | | ✓ | | | | | | 1969 | National rural development bureau |
| 40. Sudan | | 1974 ✓ | 1974 ✓ | 1972 ✓ | | | 1971 ✓ | | | |
| 41. Swaziland | | | | | ✓ | | | | 1975 | |

| COUNTRY | TYPE | | | | | | | | | DATE OF CREATION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Ministry | Commission | Bureau | Organ | Political Committee | Council | Other | | | | |
| 42. Togo | ✓ | | | | | | | | | 1975 | |
| 43. Tunisia | | | | | | | ✓ | | | 1956 | |
| 44. Uganda | | | | | | ✓ | | | | 1975 | The Council began as an International Year Committee |
| 45. United Republic of Cameroon | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | 1975 | |
| 46. United Republic of Tanzania | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | Functions according to the directives of the political party |
| 47. Upper Volta | | | | | | | ✓ | | | 1974 | |
| 48. Zaïre a/ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49. Zambia | | | | 1958 ✓ | | 1974 ✓ | | | | 1958<br>1974 | |

a/ Information has not been made available to ATRCW.

b/ Some information has been received which indicates there is no national machinery.

TABLE 20

MINIMUM AGE FOR MARRIAGE IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

| Countries | Girls | Boys |
|---|---|---|
| Botswana | 14 | 16 |
| Mauritius | 15 | 18 |
| Guinea | 17 | 18 |
| Zaïre | 14 | 18 |
| Mauritania | 9 - 10 | - |
| Senegal | 16 | 20 |
| Madagascar | 14 | 17 |
| Tunisia | 17 | 20 |
| Gambia | 21 | 21 |
| Ghana | 21 | 21 |
| Liberia | 18 | 21 |
| Nigeria | 16 | - |
| Tanzania | 18 | 18 |
| Ethiopia | 15 | 18 |
| Kenya | 16 | 18 |
| Libya | 16 | 18 |
| Egypt | 16 | 18 |

Sources

(1) Replies to questionnaires

(2) Family Welfare Laws in Ten African Countries (Vol. I)

TABLE 23

## PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE
### 1975 - 1978 (Percentage)

| COUNTRIES | Voted in Local Elections | Voted in National Elections | Elected to Public Office at the Local Level | Elected to Public Office at the National Level | Held Office at higher Levels in the Executive Branch of Government | Held Office at Higher Levels in the Judiciary | Held Office in Governmental and semi-Governmental Bodies | Held Office at higher Levels in the Major Political Parties | Held Office in Trade Unions at Higher Levels |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Guinea | 100 | 50 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| Swaziland | 70 | 70 | 10 | 6 | 10 | - | 5 | - | - |
| Madagascar | 52.12 (1977) | - | 6.4 | 3.4 | 1.1 | 12.6 | - | 4.54 | - |
| Cameroon | 59.43 | 59.4 | - | - | - | - | 7.1 (1975)<br>8.8 (1978) | 2.0 (1975)<br>3.0 (1978) | 6.0 (1975)<br>7.0 (1978) |
| Kenya* | 40 (1974)<br>60 (1978) | 50 (1974)<br>60 (1978) | 15 (1974)<br>20 (1978) | 6 (1974)<br>8 (1978) | 2 (1974<br>10 (1978) | 1 (1974)<br>2 (1978) | 15 (1974)<br>25 (1978) | 0.1 (1974)<br>0.05 (1978) | 0.1 (1974)<br>0.05 (1978) |
| Ivory Coast | | | | | 11.5(1973)<br>16.0(1978) | 4 (1975)<br>5 (1978) | | | |
| Mauritius | - | - | - | 4.1 (1978) | 4.8 (1978) | - | - | - | - |

* Figures may be not reliable.

Source: Replies to questionnaires.

TABLE 12

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
1975 - 1978 (Percentage)

| COUNTRIES | Officials in Foreign Affairs Departments | | Officials in Diplomatic Service | | Delegates to Regional Organizations Meetings (1979) | | Delegates to Regional and International Meetings Aimed at the Strengthening of International Peace | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1975 | 1979 | 1975 | 1979 | 1975 | 1979 | 1975 | 1979 |
| Swaziland | 20 | 20 | - | - | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Ivory Coast | - | - | 3 Secretaries, 1 Chancellor, 1 Assistant Secretary | | - | - | - | - |
| Egypt | 1 | 4 | 5 | 11 | Many | Increasing | Several | Increasing |
| Kenya | 5 (1974) | 9 (1978) | 1 | 5 | 20 | 25 | 25 | 40 |
| Mauritius | 4.5% (Level of administrative Secretary) | 10% | | | | | | |
| Madagascar | | 24 | | 5.55 | | 7.31 | | 30.43 |
| Libya | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 9 | 15 |
| Botswana | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 20 | 30 | - | - |
| Senegal | In 1976, 7 women were elected as deputies to the National Assembly there were 3 judges | | | | | | | |

This indicates absolute number rates

Source: Replies to the questionnaires, 1979.

Minimum Objectives for the Five-year Period (1975-1980)
as spelt out in paragraph 46 of the World Plan of Action

a) Marked increase in literacy and civic education of women, especially in rural areas;

b) The extension of co-educational technical and vocational training in basic skills to women and men in the industrial and agricultural sectors;

c) Equal access at every level of education, compulsory primary school education and the measures necessary to prevent school drop-outs;

d) Increased employment opportunities for women, reduction of unemployment and increased efforts to eliminate discrimination in the terms and conditions of employment;

e) The establishment and increase of the infrastructural services required in both rural and urban areas;

f) The enactment of legislation on voting and eligibility for election on equal terms with men and equal opportunity and conditions of employment including remuneration, and on equality in legal capacity and the exercise thereof;

g) To encourage a greater participation of women in policy-making positions at the local national and international levels;

h) Increased provision for comprehensive measures for health education and services, sanitation, nutrition, family education, family planning and other welfare services;

i) Provision for parity in the exercise of civil, social and political rights such as those pertaining to marriage, citizenship and commerce;

j) Recognition of the economic value of women's work in the home in domestic food production and marketing and voluntary activities not traditionally remunerated,

k) To direct formal, non-formal and life-long education towards the re-evaluation of the man and woman, in order to ensure their full realization as individuals in the family and in society;

l) The promotion of women's organizations as an interim measure within workers' organisations and educational, economic and professional institutions;

m) The development of modern rural technology, cottage industry, pre-school day centres, time and energy saving devices so as to help reduce the heavy work load of women, particularly those living in rural sectors and for the urban poor and thus facilitate the full participation of women in community, national and international affairs ;

n) The establishment of an interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral machinery within the government for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration into national life.

## Countries which submitted Replies to the Questionnaire

### North Africa

Tunisia
Egypt
Mauritania

### West Africa

Senegal
Guinea
Ghana
Ivory Coast

### Central Africa

Bénin
Zaire
Cameroon

### East Africa

Kenya
Uganda
Malawi*

Madagascar
Mauritius
Seychelles*

### South Africa

Botswana
Swaziland

* In the case of countries marked with an asterik, the countries supplied reports instead of responding directly to the Questionnaire

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